

Blurring Boundaries: A Critical Qualitative Exploration of the Political Values of Some  
Former International Baccalaureate Organization Students

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## ABSTRACT

Blurring Boundaries: A Critical Qualitative Exploration of the Political Values of some former International Baccalaureate Organization Students.

By Reem Ben Giaber

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) is an international education system managing 1,844 schools in 124 countries. According to its mission statement, the IBO aims to develop “active learners, well-rounded individuals and engaged world citizens” (IBO, 2006). This thesis presupposes that school experiences play a life-long role in the lives of students. Although this research project is not a study of causality, I set out to explore the political values of former IBO students.

Driven by the principles of critical qualitative theory, which ultimately views social research as a vehicle for social change approached through *active* citizenship, I am interested in whether the political values of former IBO students lean more towards passive or active, national or cosmopolitan manifestations. To this effect, ten former IBO students filled in an online questionnaire measuring political tendencies. In order to explore more directly the participants’ definitions and understandings of the issues, I invited them to an online message board where they answered eight questions inspired by the preliminary coding of the questionnaire data. I found that the group exhibited predominantly passive and cosmopolitan political tendencies.

Situating my field research in a democratic cosmopolitan citizenship matrix, I argue that the most effective approach for IBO privileged adults to contribute to a more just and equitable world, as held in their cosmopolitan worldview, must be *active* cosmopolitan citizenship. Therefore, I suggest that the IBO do all it can to contribute to

their students' future sense of political agency by supplying them with the faith and tools for *active* cosmopolitan citizenship.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I learned that words have meaning

I learned that meaning has degrees

of value

I learned that value needs an act

And I learned that an act is a word

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## DEDICATION

To my sister Malak and her husband Ibrahim who opened up their hearts and home to me. In more ways than one, I am heartless and homeless without you.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

In the field of education, there is a conviction that schooling has life-long consequences for students. It is a site for cultural production or reproduction. It is not a strange idea that past experiences shape who we are in the present and influence who we might be in the future. Indeed, the whole concept of education stands on that – otherwise there would be no point to it. It is even more understandable to assume that conscious experiences, informed by an explicit philosophy, have an even deeper influence on a person than haphazard unconscious incidents. In other words, education as a *system* with aims, objectives, processes and outcomes, is meant to be an experience that is conscious to the student.

International education is meant to be a consciously constructed experience. What that means is that the ideology of some international schools is so explicit in formal and non-formal settings, that the experiences gained there have an influence on the student's identity. It is difficult to measure this influence or effect. Indeed, non-cognitive traits are one of the most difficult phenomena to measure in empirical research. However, if we accept the premise that education has an effect on anyone or anything, then it is reasonable to assume that it plays a role in a person's value constructs as well.

*"I" state the problem*

All qualitative research stems from a spark of interest within the researcher<sup>1</sup>. The topic to be studied speaks to the researcher on an intimate or personal level. However, the development of that initial spark is what leads the topic to become more scholarly, and

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<sup>1</sup> For a more extensive discussion on methodology and the role of 'I' in research, refer to the Methodology chapter.

less personal. I do not mean to imply that subjectivity is a hindrance to research. Quite the contrary – good qualitative research takes the role of the researcher (as well as the participant's) into account in each stage of the research process. However, when a topic of interest is studied, researched, developed, and discussed, our subjectivity *expands* to include knowledge from other sources about the topic at hand. In other words, research *dilutes* subjectivity by situating it in a web of knowledge. In light of this, the writing evolution of my thesis will reflect the research process: It will start with the physical and *closed* “I” and expand into a more conceptual and *open* “I.”

It was my first class in the MA in Educational Studies at Concordia. The professor sat in a non-authoritarian-positioned chair and introduced the topic: Politics and Education. She appeared passionate. It was infectious – I was always easily influenced. But then she put a question to us and I stopped smiling. “Hands up to show who exercises their civic duties in Canada. Who votes?” She glanced in my direction and I was relieved when she added that she understood that international students did not have this privilege. “*Privilege?* How naïve,” I thought, as most of the students put up their hands. I said to myself: “Who still believes in politics? Who thinks that they have the ability to make even the slightest difference in public affairs?”

My perception of political participation has changed considerably within the last two years. An important question is why I felt so cynical about any form of political participation? My distrust of any government bordered on contempt for anybody who showed any kind of national allegiance, or worse, patriotism. The only form of political consciousness I condoned was an international worldview, a cross-cultural attitude

towards people<sup>2</sup>. Where did that come from? I attribute it to a cocktail comprised of the mission of my schooling and an ambiguous cultural background. The problem is that having a cosmopolitan<sup>3</sup> worldview seemed to be more aligned with a *passive* rather than active political awareness. However, can tolerance, a desire for cross-cultural understanding and peace, a commitment to alleviate the suffering of the unfortunate, be accomplished passively? The scope of this research project is not big enough to answer this question. However, what I can ask is whether others who have been through IBO schooling are as passive as I believe I was. **What is the nature of the political values of former IBO students?** This is where my personal experience starts to open up and my interest stimulates “I” to incorporate the experience of other people who may be like me – my research participants.

#### *IBO Schooling (Definition)*

In order for the reader to fully appreciate the purpose of this research, I must at this point offer a contextual outline of the particular type of international education I am interested in. I went to Frankfurt International School (FIS), in Germany, for 9 years until I graduated from high school with an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma. FIS is a private International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) World School. The IBO is an independent nonprofit organization of international education. This means a number of things. First, the IBO is international in that it works in partnership with international, private and state schools in 124 nations in the world. Second, it is international because it subscribes to a cosmopolitan philosophy. Third, some of its schools are made up of a culturally and nationally mixed student and staff body. It is important to distinguish it

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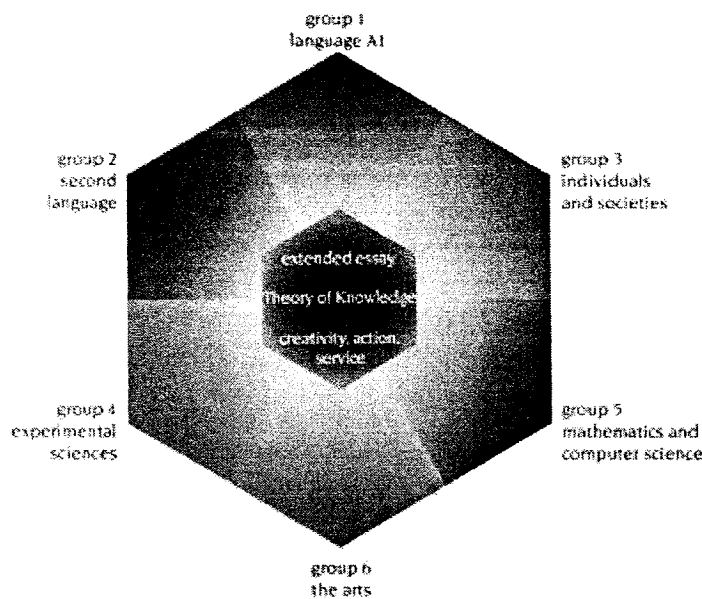
<sup>2</sup> A discussion on what this international attitude entails is found in Chapter Four.

<sup>3</sup> Cosmopolitanism, in short, is world citizenship – a global political and cultural consciousness. More in Chapter Three.

from other agents of international education, such as the international exchange programs found in some higher education institutions. These will not be addressed in this study.

If a school wants to become an IBO World School, it must offer one of its three programs of international education curricula (Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme, and Diploma Programme) and subscribe to its mission and strategy. The IBO's mission statement declares that it hopes to develop "inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect" (IBO website). There, in FIS, under the mission of the IBO, I was taught to be a proud 'world citizen.' This can be demonstrated by taking a closer look at what is probably the most popular and most influential program of the IBO, the IB Diploma Programme.

The IB Diploma is a two year globally accepted university entrance qualification. The curriculum is made up of six subjects (three at the 'Higher level', three at the 'Standard Level') clustered around three core elements (the Extended Essay/Project, a Theory of Knowledge course, and Creativity, Action, Service work). It is understood that these three elements hold the structure of the IBO philosophy together, because they highlight the IBO values for the students: essential knowledge, the promotion of skills (such as inquiry, collaborative working, conflict resolution), and expression and development of certain attitudes and values (such as tolerance, respect, compassion) (Roberts, 2002, p.13). Below is a visual diagram of the IB Diploma Programme curriculum.



*Figure 1.1* The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme: The Curriculum (IBO, 2006)

It is worthwhile to take a closer look at the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) component especially, where students are meant to realize the role each subject plays in relation to their lives and to the entire IBO ideology, as well as the role the IBO philosophy of cosmopolitanism should play for them as future adults. John Mackenzie (2000), who was a member of the IBO Philosophy and Theory of Knowledge Subject Committee, summarizes the objectives of the course:

- Develop an understanding of why critically examining knowledge claims is important;
- Develop a critical capacity to evaluate beliefs and knowledge claims;
- Make interdisciplinary connections;
- Become aware of the interpretative nature of knowledge, including personal and ideological biases;
- Consider that knowledge may place responsibilities on the knower;

- Understand the strengths and limitations of individual and cultural perspectives; and
- Develop a concern for rigour in formulating knowledge claims, and intellectual honesty (p. 46).

It should be noted that these aims are meant to be tacit, almost as side-effects of the TOK experience, rather than taught directly to students 16-19 years old. It can be argued that epistemology is not necessarily a lesson that young teenagers can grasp. However, it is supposed to at least launch them in the direction of intellectual maturity. Mackenzie (2000) points out that

the aims quoted above all refer to developing something in students, whether this be an awareness of aspects of knowing, or a particular attitude (intellectual and/or ethical), or more likely a combination of both which we may separate analytically, but which in fact will be present simultaneously in a student's later actions (p. 47).

This microscopic glance at one element of the IB Diploma Programme serves to illustrate to the outsider the concepts that are important to the IBO, as well as the academic and intellectual standards expected of its students.

As mentioned above, there are state schools all over the world that offer the IB Diploma. If the state accepts the legitimacy of the IB Diploma, then the full program is implemented with no concessions. However, some schools that offer the IB are bound to national education systems of the host countries. In these schools, the IB Diploma is regarded as a practical alternative for those who wish to embark on a university education abroad. Some might take it for its academic rigor, as a sort of advanced placement

scheme, especially if the IB Diploma is accepted in local universities. Others might appreciate its ideological aim – its commitment to international understanding.

However, it is important to distinguish Frankfurt International School (FIS), from state schools described above, because it is the site that features in my research. All of my participants went to FIS circa ten years ago. The rationale for this is explained later in the *Research Methods* section. Suffice it to say now that my participants are adults, settled into a more or less civic life.<sup>4</sup> FIS is not the focus of my study – some former students are and it is important to appreciate where they come from. FIS is typical *only* of urban private international schools that are situated in a kind of economic or political gateway, accommodating mobile and expatriate families (i.e. Frankfurt, London, Paris, Dubai, New York etc.). These are what I call ‘island’ schools, part of the IBO community, accountable only to the IBO, with its four regional offices for North America (IBNA), Latin America (IBLA), Africa, Europe and Middle East (IBAEM), and Asia Pacific (IBAP), centralized at its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

The implications of FIS not belonging to the educational system of a particular nation state must be noted in the course of this thesis. The IBO points out that it “promote(s) intercultural understanding and respect, not as an alternative to a sense of cultural and national identity, but as an essential part of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (IBO, 2006). That strongly suggests that the IBO does not encourage a political view *beyond* the nation. Indeed, the word ‘internationalism’ means that the nation state is seen as a valid and necessary marker of an individual’s membership to a group – his/her identity.

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<sup>4</sup> What form the civic life of my participants takes will be discussed later. Indeed, it is one of the research questions.

This statement caught my attention ten years after I left FIS. I do not remember openly conceding to any cultural or national allegiance, apart from an introductory statement about my origins if asked. Indeed, the international ethos we ‘caught’ (rather than one we were ‘taught’ to use John Mackenzie’s (2000) distinction) avoided strong national or cultural identification. Implicitly, politics were considered partisan, rather than a way of engaging with public life and *transforming* the world we live in, and partisanship is exclusive. Thus, if one is suspicious of national governments because they supposedly inevitably foster a closed view of the world, how does a person learn the values of and in political participation of any kind, local or global?

### *Purpose of Research*

Having established an overview for the reader of a rather influential and long-lasting culture (the IBO and its schooling), the purpose of this research is twofold: a) to explore the political values<sup>5</sup> of some students, who have experienced IBO schooling circa ten years ago, and b) in the spirit of critical qualitative research, to discuss what the most ideal political values of IBO students are. After examining previous literature on various issues such as the meaning of international education, the identity of IBO students and their ‘international mindedness,’ and the role of globalization in international education, I develop a set of questions that ten research participants answer to illuminate the following points of concern:

- If there is a pattern of political values discernable among the group;
- If the values manifest themselves more passively or actively;

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<sup>5</sup> Throughout the thesis, ‘value’ is defined as the thoughts and feelings that guide behavior and action – one’s personal paradigm.



- If the values subsume a more national/local or international/cosmopolitan worldview;
- And finally, to what extent the participants attribute, if at all, their current political values to their IBO experience.

These research questions prescribe a certain way of looking at research that I will discuss further in the next chapter on *Methodology*. At this point, suffice it point out that I aim to construct knowledge by answering these questions *in dialogue* with the participants and literature. The participants' accounts of the phenomenon works in conjunction with my interpretation of what they are saying. As can also be gathered from these research questions, the analysis of the findings will refer to political theories in order to make meaning or organize the data collected.

### *Rationale*

This research is not a study of causality. It is merely an exploration of one aspect that may have been influenced by an international schooling experience. I am interested in the political and moral significance of international education in an increasingly globalizing world. Therefore, an indirect purpose of this study is to explore the ways in which former International Baccalaureate students attribute their political values to their International Baccalaureate Organization schooling experience. It is also an examination of the particular nature of these political values and how they manifest themselves in the lives of these former students. I hope that the analysis of the findings, with reference to various theoretical concepts imbedded implicitly or explicitly in the IBO ideology, will contribute to the constantly developing field of international education. Moreover, I hope

that my research will contribute to the ways in which the IBO international education can:

- 1) develop bigger research projects to demarcate the nature of its cultural production, not just immediately after the IBO experience, but also later on in its students' lives;
- 2) be more self-conscious of its aims, practices and influences;
- 3) be more effective in instilling *active* political values (active democratic cosmopolitan citizenship) that lead to a more just, tolerant and free world.

### *Thesis Organization*

The reader will notice that the structure of my ideas is more cyclical than linear. I often refer to different parts of the thesis before the reader actually arrives at these parts. The reason for this is that I believe units of knowledge are perpetually referential to other units of knowledge. No piece of knowledge stands isolated. Indeed, parts can only be fully appreciated with the awareness of all the branches they come from. Nevertheless, the following thesis write-up plan is meant to be the best break-down of the ideas I engage with in this research process.

Chapter Two is dedicated to methodology. This part will offer a philosophical discussion of postpositivistic research. I find it extremely important for the researcher to situate him/herself with regards to epistemological concerns - what I think about the nature of knowledge and scientific research in the social sciences. This perspective will inevitably color the research I conduct and the conclusions I 'discover.' Here, I will also present my particular research design and execution, presenting the actual 'mechanics' of my inquiry - the data gathering techniques, participants, and research setting(s).

The theoretical framework is developed in Chapter Three. Here, my own agenda in the research topic, the aspiration for a democratic cosmopolitan citizenship, is exposed as that is a necessary stage for the methodology adopted and explained in the preceding chapter. I therefore briefly discuss democracy, citizenship and cosmopolitanism in order to develop an ideal model for IBO adults. The value of such a model is emphasized with the literature review in the following chapter, which reveals the lack of and the necessity for empirical research conducted on the political values of IBO students that are now adults.

Chapter Four familiarizes the reader with previous literature on international education and the International Baccalaureate Organization. I will survey and summarize documents published in journals and books either by members of the IBO or ‘outside’ scholars who have specifically researched the definition(s) of ‘international’ education, the identity of students of international education, and the role of globalization in the field. Chapter Four is to be read as a sample of the issues that occupy the minds of IBO researchers and practitioners.

The next chapter, (Chapter Five), will hold the data presentation and analysis on the political values of my participants. The concepts examined in the previous chapters will serve to frame the data analysis, while hopefully steering clear of overt interpretative shackling of the data. I will also address the limitations of this inquiry. Finally, I will conclude (Chapter Six) by summarizing the main points covered in the previous chapters and the implications of the topic itself and for future research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODS

#### *Introduction*

There are two dimensions to this thesis. The first is my development as a researcher and the second, the development of knowledge on the topic studied. Indeed, the latter aids in the improvement of the former and vice versa. It is a research continuum that has often baffled and overwhelmed me, but never distracted me from appreciating the significance of being self-reflexive<sup>6</sup> at every stage of this process. In this chapter, the actual research topic (political values of former IBO students) will pass to the background, while I concentrate on and define my role as an inquirer. The reason it is important to mark myself in such a way is because only a theoretically well-defined and outlined project – with beginning, middle, and end - can give me guidelines on how to conduct sound research and can ask for the attention and feedback of the research community. It is by naming myself that I become *visible* to myself and to others. Finally, in the words of Pushkala Prasad (2005):

The absence of theoretical grounding, the lack of a theoretically driven focus, the failure to develop careful and well-structured methodologies, and an unawareness of the fundamental assumptions underpinning one's fieldwork are more likely to result in a piece of work that is closer to a shabby and pedestrian form of journalism. Such studies can do little more than report and categorize the results of interviewing and observation (p.6).

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<sup>6</sup> Defined as self-aware and self-critical with reference to my own historical situation, context and capabilities in constructing my knowledge and reality.

As I am at the very beginning of my journey as a researcher, I do not feel comfortable adopting one single and comprehensive methodology. I distinguish ‘methodology’ from ‘research methods.’ As Bogdan and Biklen (2003) point out, ‘methods’ delineate the research techniques or “mechanics,” such as surveys or interviews, whereas ‘methodology’ is the theoretical perspective of the research project (p.31). The distinction however, is not mutually exclusive. It is the methodology that determines the methods and it is the topic that determines the methodology.

On a grand scale, methodology refers to my subscription to the postpositivistic approach to science (elaboration below). However, on a smaller scale, it would refer to the various qualitative methods one could use in research depending on the questions one asks (such as ethnography, phenomenology, action research and their respective research strategies). Indeed, to subscribe to one such methodology at this point might even narrow the multiple ways of seeing that are important to a qualitative study. To explicitly illuminate my position, this chapter is divided into four sections: (a) in the first section, I briefly introduce postpositivism and qualitative research; (b) the second section provides an elaborate discussion on critical theory; (c) I ‘place’ myself in light of the preceding two sections in the third section; (d) and finally, in the fourth section, I will describe the research methods employed in this study.

### *Postpositivism and Qualitative Research*

The new philosophy of science (postpositivism) introduced into the mainstream by Thomas Kuhn’s (1961) revolutionary *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, asserts that perception, which makes up observation, is theory-laden. To be able to determine the objective ‘truth’ about an activity or a phenomenon, one must ask the same questions,

have had similar experiences and come from the same background as those to whom one is speaking/writing to; in short, empirical observation is communitarian. Where does this leave the idea that scientific inquiry is based on objective and value-free observation, which leads to truth?

In postpositivism, the very logic of positivistic induction is challenged, because ‘normal’ or positivistic scientists make generalizations after observing particular instances in a phenomenon, not *every* possible instance in a phenomenon. The observed instance is determined and framed by a certain question or mode of inquiry, which necessarily neglects all other data that could be visible at one time. Therefore, this finite collection of data, cannot determine for certain the accuracy and truth of a knowledge claim. The selection process involved in collecting *relevant* data challenges the absolutism of any conclusions. Instead, the only claim we can hope to make is a probabilistic one (Phillips and Burbules, 2000: p, 23). A particular theory then, like history, does not reflect the objective and infallible truth of events or phenomena. Rather, it constitutes what has become the most popular version of events, depending on certain criteria agreed upon by the research community.

The popularization of qualitative research is a remarkable moment in postpositivistic theory. It is the practical application of the new philosophy of science. What is interesting about qualitative research is that it started in sociological and anthropological traditions, two branches of social science that examine extremely fluid and unsettled phenomena: human beings, their environment and their behavior. Therefore, from the outset, qualitative research is self-conscious when making truth claims regarding its ‘subjects.’

In their seminal *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Denzin & Lincoln (2005) map the evolution of qualitative research. They firmly situate it in the postpositivistic tradition but are reluctant to give more than a general definition of the approach as it is so multi-disciplinary and multi-paradigmatic. They explain that “qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world” (p. 3). The last part of the quotation harks to what we now deem the agenda of some qualitative research. As research is never neutral and objective, most qualitative inquiry today has made its main orientation political. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) put it, “But now at the dawn of this new century we struggle to connect qualitative research to the hopes, needs, goals and promises of a free democratic society” (p. 3). Qualitative research, therefore, ties in neatly with the nature of critical theory in particular.

### *Critical Theory*

Critical theory is many-faceted and ever-evolving. It covers models such as feminist theory, critical race theory, and neo-Marxist theory, among others. However, this section will focus on the most general characteristic of critical theory, which is applicable to all these subcategories. I will elaborate on the significance of a *dialectical relationship* between theory and practice, and reflection and action (praxis), thereby implicating the individual (researcher and participant) and society in critical theory.

Starting with the dialectical relationship between theory and practice, I will first focus on an explication of ‘theory’ and how that inevitably leads into ‘practice.’ Critical theory is a socio-political *paradigm* in the Kuhnian (1962) sense of the word: an explanation of a phenomenon that also recommends a *method* for continuous inquiry. It

therefore aims to expose the inequitable yet silent power structures in society as well as advise a method to move on. Derived from the philosophical works of the members of the Frankfurt School in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, critical theory is the mode of inquiry meant to illuminate the dark times of an industrialized and disillusioned society, which became ever more conscious of its oppressive and marginalizing tendencies. This is a concern that theorists have until today when faced with the ever-oppressive and divisive forces of capitalism. Critical theory offers a mode of analysis that captures contemporary social disparity, while simultaneously urging people to end it. It is therefore intrinsically value-laden. Henry A. Giroux (2003) observes that

according to the Frankfurt School, any understanding of the nature of theory has to begin with a grasp of the relationships that exist in society between the particular and the whole, the specific and the universal. This position appears in direct contradiction to the empiricist claim that theory is primarily a matter of classifying and arranging facts. (p. 35)

Indeed, this postpositivistic perspective posits that a person working within critical theory (or any other) framework cannot escape his/her own value-laden interests and assume a 'scientific' neutrality during any kind of inquiry. When we critically examine society, the theory and the theorizer has to be self-critical and self-conscious as to the role s/he plays in what is to be examined. We have to contextualize and historicize our present condition. The nature of the questions we ask about the world, or the way we may perceive objects differently than another person, is tied to the idea of *interpretation*.

Hermeneutics is therefore a useful concept of postpositivistic thought, in that it holds that all acts of seeing are interpretative (Prasad, 2005, p.32). What is extremely



conducive in hermeneutics is the fact that it *incorporates* the notion that inquiry is interpretative, with the imperativeness of self-consciousness or self-reflection. In other words, it is acceptable to have biases, as long as one is aware of them and the way they might influence one's judgments. Moreover, Prasad (2005) reminds us that Hans-Georg Gadamer's primary contribution to the philosophy of hermeneutics is the concept of 'productive prejudice' (p. 33). Gadamer does not problematize 'prejudice' because it is unavoidable. Prasad suggests that the reason Gadamer calls some prejudices productive is because "he makes a distinction between 'productive prejudices' that enhance our understanding, and unproductive ones that hinder our understanding" (p.33).

The reason I dwell on the empirical aspect of theory is due to the fact that critique (easily confused with 'critical') is usually understood as just a rational explanation of the validity and/or boundaries of a phenomenon. Critique is a legacy of the Enlightenment's rational tradition which holds that a person can ascertain the 'truth' through pure reasoning. Therefore, the attainment of truth (or enlightenment) was the ultimate goal. This is not enough for our social theory. A critique does not insist on action but a *critical critique* does. Therefore, a raised consciousness or awareness of an event without ultimately trying to, in one's own life, change some unfair practice may not be adhering to the system of critical theory. This does not necessarily mean a call for political activism; an active role can also entail *making others aware* of a particular situation. The value orientation of critical theory is carried within the practitioner's (researcher) agenda to alleviate the suffering of the oppressed through social criticism and activism (Carspecken, 1996, p. 6-7).

In light of this, the strongest commitment of critical theory is that it leads to *practice*. Therefore, an active and/or political trajectory is inherent to the concept of critical theory. As Peter McLaren (2003) points out, “critical theorists begin with the premise that *men and women are essentially unfree and inhabit a world rife with contradictions and asymmetries of power and privilege* [author’s italics]” (p. 69). It only follows that once one is aware of this predicament, one would want to *transform* it. In his cautious breakdown of the concerns of critical pedagogy, an institutional offspring of critical theory, Kincheloe (2004) calls the practical element of the theory “the concept of immanence” (p. 53). He notes that “critical theory is always concerned with what could be, what is immanent in various ways of thinking and perceiving. Thus, critical theory should always move beyond the contemplative realm to concrete social reform” (p. 53).

This brings us to the reflection-action (praxis) dialectic which Paulo Freire (1970) discussed in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire is more famous for explicating and practicing critical *pedagogy* than for his contribution to the branch of critical qualitative theory we have been looking at here. However, his ideas echo the concerns of the Frankfurt School and are worth mentioning. He (2003) defines praxis as “the action and reflection of men upon their world in order to transform it” (p. 62). An individual must act upon and within the world s/he inhabits. Therefore, s/he must reflect upon whatever s/he becomes conscious of and as a consequence must act in accordance with this new knowledge. The individual is firmly couched in society and society in the individual. These two concepts are inseparable and cannot be studied or acted out in isolation. Indeed, the dialectical is evident in precisely this interaction between individual and reality, or individual and society in order to make meaning and ‘truth’ (Morrow &

Torres, 2002, p. 34). The idea that an individual is first a social being who is *capable of* and *responsible for* making a difference is reaffirmed in McLaren's (2003) analysis of the dialectical in viewing social problems:

Rather, these problems form part of the *interactive context* between individual and society. The individual, a social actor, both creates and is created by the social universe of which he/she is a part. Neither the individual nor society is given priority in analysis.... (p. 69)

As such, critical qualitative research also takes into account the role of the individual (in the form of the researcher and the participant) within a social totality that is characterized by the research topic, the participants, the research community, and the researcher's *place*. Carspecken (1996) writes that it is "designed to study social action taking place in one or more social sites and to explain this action through examining locales and social systems intertwined with the site of interest" (p.40). Bogdan and Biklen (2003) make a similar point when they remind us of Roman and Apple also postulating that although in qualitative research, the work is influenced by the theoretical orientation or political commitments of the researcher, that understanding is modified when the researcher comes into contact with his/her participants. They hold that

these views, then, suggest that when qualitative researchers do research they engage in a kind of dialogue with their informants. Their own theoretical and ideological views are powerful, but these perspectives are also shaped by what they learn from their informants (cited in Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 31).

At this point, I will turn to one of the harshest criticisms of critical theory. Due to the characteristics of some offspring of critical theory, more than to a detailed analysis of

the Frankfurt School, it is often named a postmodernist theory. Although, the Frankfurt School branch of critical theory makes use of some postmodern strategies in its deconstruction of absolute and universal knowledge, specifically its stance on the construction and reception of *value* and *power*, it simply is NOT a postmodern theory. Postmodernism fragments and relativizes reality to such an extent that no claim to ‘truth’ can be made (Baltodano, Darder, & Torres (eds.), 2003. p. 18). The difference within critical theory is its political agenda. Being explicitly political, critical theory makes a very loud ‘truth’ claim: all human beings deserve equality in an all inclusive democratic state. Therefore, it does not reject the legacy of the Enlightenment completely; it does not neglect rationality. It only is more cautious in placing this rationality in a situated and contextualized mode of thinking. In other words, where postmodernism is comfortable with breaking all boundaries in its quest for an ever-elusive truth, modernist thinking is ready to ask questions and turn concepts inside-out *within* the limits of a fathomable truth.

The concern with critical theory being postmodern and relativist is confounded by the fact that Jurgen Habermas (the contemporary proponent of the Frankfurt School) actually opposes postmodernism because it undermines “progressive cultural politics” (“Postmodernism,” 2005, para. 60). How can any moral progress be made if the very validity of notions such as ‘truth’ or ‘justice’ is questioned? As McLaren (2003) explains “we cannot ‘know’ truth except through its ‘effects.’ Truth is not *relative* (in the sense of ‘truths’ proclaimed by various individuals and societies are all equal in their effects) but is *relational* (statements considered ‘true’ are dependent upon history, cultural context, and relations of power operative in a given society, discipline, institution, etc.)” (p. 85).

It is clear that critical theory's reliance on postpositivistic empiricism and rationality in making any knowledge claims makes it a modernist, rather than a postmodernist theory. I think that this is probably the most dangerous of misconceptions of critical theory because thinking of it as postmodern undermines its very purpose. James Bohman (2005) makes an important distinction in observing that "[t]he core claim here is that fallibilism is different from relativism, suggesting that it is possible to distinguish between truth and the context of justification of claims to truth" ("Postmodernism", 2005, para. 9).

### *My Place*

As mentioned in the '*I State the Problem*' section of the Introduction, the 'I' marks the personal which must confront the professional 'I.' There is always a deep connection between personal identity and scholarly inquiry. Although this connection is not the *main* focus of my research, it is nonetheless placed in the foreground of this inquiry. Therefore, as a critical qualitative inquirer, I hereby declare that I situate myself *inside* of the research project:

- I am a former IBO student myself and therefore I am *part* of the culture I am studying.
- As an extension of the former point, I carry within me a set of assumptions that I implicitly know the participants to share with me. This also places me firmly within the research process.
- I believe that any knowledge I construct (and assumptions I de-construct) during this process happens in *dialogue* with my participants and with the literature I review.

I do not contend that being *inside* a research project is problematic. Indeed, I find it helpful in the asking of questions and in the interpretation of data. I share with the participants what Carspecken (1996) calls “the normative-evaluative category” (p. 20). I am part of the studied culture which offers me a ground for communicating in a language that my participants and I understand. We agree on some fundamental *values* that have been instilled in us through schooling. However, there is some contention with the *norm* – the ‘acceptable’ way to act or behave if one holds these values. This is where my inquiry journey begins. In the end, I intend to use any prejudice productively (to use Prasad’s (2005) warning) rather than allow it to become a hindrance to the better understanding of my topic.

### *Research Methods*

It may already be evident that the main trajectory of the entire research project is critical theoretical. I define the reading and interpretation of the numerous secondary sources (i.e. journal articles, chapters in books, sections in university course packs) as part of my research methods. They are as important to me and the purpose of this research as the field research involving the participants. Therefore, at the macrocosmic level, this study constitutes two research stages: firstly, the review of relevant theory and empirical studies to elucidate the topic; and secondly, the field research. In the more significant first stage, I develop the theoretical framework which indicates my agenda and the proposed direction of the study. In addition, I review previous empirical and theoretical studies on the IBO culture to highlight the pertinence of my own topic interest. The actual empirical research of stage two, therefore, is more like a case study, which is too small and particular to allow any generalizing statements. The field research

is thus meant to (a) disclose the participants' political values as well as their thoughts and feelings about the issue in focus, and hopefully (b) make them critically aware of the held values and their implications merely by participating in this study. The data analysis in Chapter Five should be viewed *within* the framework of the two preceding chapters, not as the highlight of the whole thesis. Now that my position on the field research is clear, I will describe the field research methods employed in this study.

### *The Participants and Settings*

The participants in this study are ten former Frankfurt International School (FIS) students of 27 and 28 years of age. This entails a typical case sampling of former IBO students because they may be perceived as representative of many. The age range is important because the participants should now be 'settled', finished (or almost finished) with their university education, possibly on a career path and set in a particular lifestyle. In short, they should be autonomous adults whose values and actions may have an impact on their social, political and economic environment.

All participants went to the same high (secondary) school – Frankfurt International School (FIS) in Germany. This is also the school I attended and this ensures easy access to the participants' contact details and also maybe some responsibility towards taking part in the study. FIS is a private IBO World school, NOT affiliated nor bound to the national educational system of Germany. Its student body consists of sons and daughters of 'mixed' marriages, diplomats, political and economic expatriates, business people, and other internationally mobile parents. Therefore, the school is also meant to be typical of other IBO World schools that are private and mainly unaffected by national education policies.

### *Data Collection and Analysis*

There were two phases of data collection and analysis: a survey and open-ended questions on a message board. The particular geographical mobility of my participants forced me to use the Internet as my primary instrument for data collection. The participants were asked to 'sign' the consent forms by filling out the form and sending it back to me and my thesis supervisor who thus acted as a witness. Next, I emailed them a link to a website containing the questionnaire. In this way, the completed questionnaire was returned to my email without indicating the address of the participant who filled it out. A survey may be considered more of quantitative rather than a qualitative research tool. However, given the particular geographical dispersal of my participants, it was the most practical option available. Moreover, I do not categorically reject the value of surveys as their qualitative validity can be safeguarded by the researcher's self-reflexive alertness in the data's organization and analysis.

The questionnaire was adapted from a World Values Survey (Institute for Social Research, 2005). Selecting some questions from this survey and adding original questions, I finally posed 22 questions regarding political values that I then thematically condensed into nine categories for easier analysis [see Appendix I for the questionnaire and see Chapter Five for results]. The 22 questions reflected my interest in the nature of the participants' political tendencies with regards to the following ten values: passive (P) active (A), national (N), international (I), promotion of social welfare (SW) policies, interest in the prominence and success of economics and business (EI), more extreme leanings towards privatization and free-market independence (FM), favoring citizen freedom and autonomy in the liberal philosophy sense (CF), and finally, permissive of



government or state intervention in public and private affairs (SI). These categories were recognized from various political philosophical readings, most of which feature in the theoretical framework of Chapter Three, as well as being preset by the adapted World Values Questionnaire. Once I coded every response in relation to these categories, it was easier to determine the general political tendencies among these ten participants. Of course, this sample is too small to warrant any valid generalizations about former IBO adults worldwide - it merely serves as an indication of the political values held by ten former Frankfurt International School students.

Having employed the questionnaire, I was wary of false representation of political values due to set or fake responses. Moreover, answering a question by ticking off a box shows only (if true) the values at the moment the question was answered (more on questionnaire limitations in Chapter Five). Therefore, to allow more participant-centered elaboration on the topic, I invited the same participants, out of which only seven obliged this time, to an internet message board. A message board (or forum) is an electronic conversation on a website accessible by all invited participants. Similar to a focus group interview, I posted eight open-ended questions derived from a preliminary categorical pattern analysis of the questionnaire, to encourage a further elaboration of the participants' definitions, insights and opinions about the categories. The advantage of the message boards was that they could read each other's comments as they formulated their own thoughts and expressions. This did not happen in real conversation time, but over a period of 2 weeks. Therefore, they had time to reflect on what they wrote and to use others' comments to question their own assumptions, meanings and definitions. If they wished to be anonymous, they were able to choose a pseudonym to sign into the forum

[see Appendix II for the eight forum questions]. The questions on the message board were more directly tied to their experience to an IBO school, as opposed to the general political values questions of the questionnaire. The answers varied in length and depth, but it was still possible to isolate a number of categories similar to the ones employed in the questionnaire analysis.

During this two-phased data collection period, I read countless articles and chapters on research methods, methodology, political theory, and on the field of international education and the IBO. This literature review inevitably informed my interpretation and analysis of the data. In Chapter Five, the data collected in this manner will be discussed. Mindful of Prasad's (2005) critique of shabby research, I will hopefully succeed in discussing the findings in relation to the theoretical framework so that the chapter is more than mere journalistic reporting and categorizing of data.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The conception of education as a social process and function has no definite meaning until we define the kind of society we have in mind.

John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*

As postulated in the methodology chapter, critical qualitative theory is not neutral. In this chapter, I make my agenda clear, by exposing an ideal – a vision of a democratic cosmopolitan citizen. This entails that I analyze democracy, citizenship and cosmopolitanism separately in order to finally re-construct them as one, albeit flexible, entity. I propose that the IBO needs to take this discussion into account if it seriously and honestly wants to develop strategies to reach the aims of its mission statement. The IBO should explore whether successfully transmitted attitudes and values of ‘international-mindedness’ or ‘cross-cultural understanding’ are enough to safeguard democratic principles of peace, equality and justice worldwide? If critical social and political and pedagogical theories today are calling for more civic participation, for *transformative* citizenship, or at least some active form of citizenship in order to develop and preserve a democratic way of life for all, what role do IBO graduates play in this? What kind of citizens does the IBO develop, and more importantly, what kind of citizens *should* it cultivate?

This chapter will be divided into three parts. First, I will discuss democracy through Dewey (1997) and Miller (2003), thereby recommending the most ideal vision of democracy for institutions of international education. Secondly, I look at citizenship, using Dewey (1997), Freire (1970), Gutmann (1997), Osborne (2001), and Torres (1998)

to help me develop a vision of active citizenship that can suit students of international education. Finally, examining the debates on and within cosmopolitanism, alluding to mainly Nussbaum (1996) and Appiah (1998), while considering criticism on cosmopolitanism (Gutmann, 1996; Himmelfarb, 1996), I expose the model for active democratic cosmopolitan citizenship that should be fostered within international school walls.

### *Democracy*

The reader might wonder why I think it necessary to enter into the realms of political philosophy. However, as I have some ‘foundationalist’<sup>7</sup> tendencies in me, it is understandable that I attribute the ideological aims of the IBO to the political principles of democracy. Indeed, this path was suggested to me when reading the various articles for Chapter Four, particularly the various definitions, conceptions, and origins of ‘internationalism.’ Having said this, I am in no position at this point to offer a qualified argument on the various and best forms of democracy. For the purposes of this study, I am only prepared to venture a general introduction to the principles of democracy and to what extent these are tied to the principles of the IBO.

At its most basic level, democracy today is understood as a form of popular political authority (government by and for the people) consolidated by the infrastructure of the state. Turning to the political philosopher Miller (2003) to fill in this skeletal conception, he states that the democratic form of political authority rests on two assumptions: first, that all human beings are equal and so any relations of authority between them must be justified; second, that the interests of the people are protected by

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<sup>7</sup> The idea is to fully appreciate or understand something, one must start from the most basic premise or principle and build up from there.

making them the “final repository of political authority” (Miller, 2003, p.38), meaning that anyone with special powers is accountable to the people. In order for these two assumptions to function, a democracy needs “a wealthy and literate population, media of mass communication so that ideas and opinions can circulate freely, a well functioning legal system that commands people’s respect, and so forth” (p.16). The democratic theory promises that if all these conditions were met, the state would be a just and equitable place. In theory then, democracy is very attractive. In practice however, things are very different. The people are allowed (if they will) to vote periodically, they are consulted (if interested) when there is a referendum on a major constitutional question, and they may promote an issue of concern by forming groups that lobby their representatives (Miller, 2003, p.40). Hence, it is evident, that at its most theoretical, a democracy requires *at least a minimum* of participation from its citizens<sup>8</sup>.

Notwithstanding Miller’s (2003) useful contemporary definition of democracy, an older but perhaps more nuanced conceptualization of democracy was written by John Dewey in 1916. Instead of offering a fixed descriptive definition of democracy, which is based on an *ideal* so much that it has no practical or credible use for anybody, Dewey (1997) prefers to see it in a more fluid and flexible light, leaving it up to a society or nation-state to conceive of it in its own image. As such, Dewey suggests that it is a mode of social life that entails two basic principles that must be safeguarded at every level of human association, in every public or private institution, organization, office, or any kind of political, social, economic or religious group. These principles are that a) the group in question should have as varied and as many interests that are continuously communicated

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<sup>8</sup> It is difficult to separate a discussion on democracy from a discussion of citizenship. Nonetheless, citizenship is *not* the focus here.

and shared among the members of that group; and b) that groups are transparent and interactive with other associations in order to continuously evolve and improve by dealing with new situations brought on by this interaction (p.292). Conceiving of democracy in terms of social groups, communities, or social networks is not invalid today; many contemporary political and social theorists posit the same idea (Coleman, 1990; Macpherson, 1973; Putnam, 1995 all cited in Torres, 1998; Osborne 2001; Torres 1998).

Interestingly, both Miller's (2003) contemporary definition and Dewey's (1997) older work emphasize the crucial necessity for civic participation. For Miller, it is a matter of rights and responsibilities tied up to the nation-state, while for Dewey it is almost a question of survival, closely connected to the evolution of humanity. In fact, Miller harshly, but amusingly, reminds us that "our word 'idiot' comes from the Greek *idiotes* which was the term used to describe someone who lived an entirely private existence and took no part in the public life of the city"<sup>9</sup> (p.48). Dewey's more temperate tone bases the whole idea of democracy on social processes – interaction and deliberation in a diverse society, in a pluralistic world. Moreover, noteworthy to us here, is that Dewey's delineation of democracy, although rooted in the idea of society, community, or nation-state, essentially extends far beyond national borders. Especially in a democratic education, where the "habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder" (p.301) are fostered, Dewey finds that the 'national sovereignty' should not become a boundary that hinders the "free intercourse and communication of experience" (p.301) across nations. As he states,

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<sup>9</sup> I am not suggesting that any civically passive or cynical person is an idiot! It is just an amusing note.

the emphasis must be put upon whatever binds people together in cooperative human pursuits and results, apart from geographical limitations. The secondary and provisional character of national sovereignty in respect to the fuller, freer, and more fruitful association and intercourse of all human beings with one another must be instilled as a working disposition of mind (p.300-301).

It is all too clear why this becomes important to the aims of international education. In Miller's (2003) analysis, democracy is inextricably tied to the nation-state. However, the basic philosophy of democracy as the vehicle to make a just and equitable world for every human being if people exercise their political authority is still compatible with the aims of international education (peace, tolerance, cross-cultural understanding etc.). Dewey's (1997) theory of democracy, on the other hand, can be more easily applied to international education. The values appreciated by Dewey are promoted in the field of international education - sharing, interaction across and between cultural groups, humanity as the final point of reference. The question is whether institutions of international education are paying *as much* attention to the student's communal or local consciousness (important to Dewey and Miller) as they are to the student's global consciousness? And if there is a differentiation of value between the local and the global, what are the implications for democracy?

### *Citizenship*

As can be gathered from the section on 'Democracy,' it is very difficult to separate a discussion on democracy from a discussion of 'citizenship.' The most popular understanding of citizenship is probably simply a question of national identity – a person is a citizen of x country, with a common language, culture and heritage. More nuanced, it

is a membership contract that legally protects and binds the civic, political and social rights (Torres, 1998, p.105) of individuals within a state. However, this definition must be developed further.

Some theorists, like Ken Osborne (2000) argue that citizenship is defined differently depending on what political denomination you belong to – conservative, liberal or socialist. A closer, but very brief, look at the evolution of ‘citizenship’ may shed some light on its different faces. In his critique of the liberal tradition of citizenship, Torres (1998) examines a theory of citizenship from the Enlightenment’s philosophy of consciousness, where the individual is seen as autonomous and capable of developing his/her full potential, in association and reflection of another’s (p.104). This is the beginning of the liberal conception of citizenship which was then extended into the realm of the liberal state. So historically speaking, the primacy of the state came after the prominence of the individual. The state became the structure that glued the individual entities together. The function of the nation-state as the category of existence superior to that of the ‘individual’ only gained ground in the later Enlightenment years (early 19<sup>th</sup> century), when essentializing notions of citizenship were challenged in favor of a review of social formations and experiences (Torres, 1998, p.104). In Dewey’s (1997) historical analysis, “The ‘state’ was substituted for humanity, cosmopolitanism gave way to nationalism. To form the citizen, not the ‘man,’ [*sic*] became the aim of education” (p.297). And in reverse, ‘man’ (the individual) was soon easiest conceived of as ‘citizen’ with a particular national identity, whose goal in life should be the progress of ‘his’ (men were the only citizens then) nation-state’s interests and welfare.



However, in contemporary liberal democratic philosophy, the ‘citizen’ is closely tied to the idea of democracy. A democratic mode of life presupposes civic engagement and civic engagement presupposes a democratic mode of life. This is what Torres (1998) identifies as Rousseau’s paradox, a point that baffles me when facing the complexity of the topic, as well as when I consider the intricacy of the role of democracy and citizenship within the framework of international education. What is the role of international education in a discussion about democratic citizenship? And what is civic participation in and after a democratic international education that does not unequivocally mold itself on the needs of a particular local society, community, or nation-state?

To begin answering this question, it is extremely useful to make note of Torres’ (1998) distinction between citizenship as identity (reflective of the citizen-of-x-state discussion above) and citizenship as a set of civic virtues. As a word of caution, it is advisable not to completely polarize these two points but to see them as intricately linked to each other.

What Torres (1998) means by citizenship as a set of civic virtues involves issues that are less tied to the idea of the nation-state and more to questions of character and behavior. In that way, democratic citizenship is better defined in form, rather than in content. In form, it is allowed to continuously evolve depending on the circumstances. Osborne (2001), undoubtedly following Dewey’s train of thought, claims that “democracy is, in part, a process of and a commitment to continual debate and deliberation in which the ultimate goal is more debate and deliberation” (p.53). In Israel Scheffler’s (1997) words, the democratic ideal

sustains itself not by the indoctrination of myth, but by the reasoned choices of its citizens, who continue to favor it in the light of a critical scrutiny both of it and its alternatives. Choice of the democratic ideal rests upon the hope that this ideal will be sustained and strengthened by critical and responsible inquiry into the truth about social matters (p.436-437).

In order for these citizens to make such informed choices then, what characteristics should they possess? What does Pateman (1970, cited in Torres, 1998) mean by “democratic personality” (p.147)? In a nutshell, the democratic personality is one that is perpetually open to deliberation whenever new situations afford themselves, whenever new interests and concerns by social groups are put forward, and whenever a question of diverse value emerges. The possibilities of citizenship, Torres argues, have been extended and developed whenever a social conflict or struggle has been fought over in the public arena (p.134). The democratic personality, in Gutmann’s (1997) view, is found when a person *participates* in “the conscious social reproduction” (p.431) of his/her society. She writes ‘conscious’ because the citizen should be critical and analytical of different conceptions of the good life and the good society. Moreover, Gutmann argues, there is a value judgment behind “deliberative freedom and communal self-determination” (p.431). Democratic citizenship does not mean neutrality – as a citizen, one should be able to use “knowledge to *evaluate* [*my emphasis*] and participate in the life of the present with the aim of shaping the future” as Paulo Freire suggested (Osborne, 2001, p.44).

However, there is a general alarm among advocates of participatory democracies, because participation has noticeably declined. The apathy of citizens, inspired by passivity and cynicism at best, and disenfranchisement and repression at worst, is now

known as the ‘democratic deficit’ (Osborne, 2001, p.37). For Osborne (2001), apathetic citizens are justified in their feelings because the system has failed them. He blames this failure on the selling out of public educative spaces (i.e. schools) to the demands of market economics. Schools are now no longer aiming to produce citizens, but able and competitive workers, because “education for democracy is counter-productive in the era of the global marketplace” (p.40). Democratic citizenship must be taught in schools, as the institutions of family and media are too difficult to regulate without intrusive state interference. Education is once again the site which offers hope out of a stagnant situation. Osborne argues that

there is a role for education in alerting students to the problems that exist, and leading them to reflect on alternative ways of conceptualizing and organizing democracy to make it more socially just and inclusively participatory; and in providing them with the kinds of participatory experiences that will lead them to become democratically active citizens in adult life (p.38).

When democracy and citizenship are understood as continuous processes, it follows that individuals must *act* to move along that process. The pedagogical project inherent in such a vision calls upon schools to educate their students into the necessary forms of civic engagement to transform an inequitable society. Schools must initiate students into the ‘rules’ or ‘civic virtues’ of effective citizenship. Ultimately, however, it must be political enough to encourage changing a society that is not ideal – for what use is it to know that our society is not perfect without trying to make it better? What use is it to be educated in civic engagement without a democratic vision?

The issue here can be also handled in light of what has been called ‘passive’ or ‘active’ citizenship. Citizenship education imbued with critical pedagogy endorsed by Freire (1970) would dismiss the ‘passivity’ of any citizen, because ‘passive’ suggests ‘neutral’ and that is something no human or education can be. Therefore, as a form of damage control, schools and teachers should not claim neutrality but make their political orientations constantly *visible*. In *The Politics of Education*, Paulo Freire (1998) makes this the central theme running through his discussion on education. To shape conscious and conscientious people, to ‘conscientize’ people is to make them aware of and *act upon* their politics. In the curriculum, Freire asserts that “the starting point for organizing the program content of education or political action must be the present, existential, concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations of the people” (Freire, 1970, p.85).

Although global marketplaces are getting bigger and stronger, I feel confident that the pressure exerted by academia on the left will eventually lead to a shift in public policy with regards to citizenship education. I assume however, that with the influence of globalization<sup>10</sup>, citizenship education will take the form of civic virtues more than citizenship as identity – it will be a matter of emphasis. Moreover, citizenship as identity is becoming increasingly problematic as various interest groups and social movements voice their divergent views on an essentializing identity. Even with the identity/loyalty oriented citizenship education in the United States after 9/11, I predict that the unproblematic acceptance of such an endeavor will not last long after the passion of solidarity and patriotism subsides.

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<sup>10</sup> Globalization as defined by David Held (2006) as a spatial reorganization of the world. See Chapter Two for more details.

All this has important implications for the field of international education. Due to the isolated nature of some international schools, unbound by any national education system, citizenship education is very difficult to conceptualize. As a set of civic virtues, especially as habits of deliberation, critical analysis, tolerance, and flexibility etc., international education is already involved in citizenship education. The question is then, to what extent does the teaching of civic virtues have to be linked to the idea of a particular democratic nation-state? The matter of the ideal therefore, what Dewey called “the social aim,” is still open for discussion in international education. To this end, it is time to turn to ‘cosmopolitanism.’

### *Cosmopolitanism*

Again, I must state that the discussion of cosmopolitanism that follows is by no means extensive. Here, I only examine the tip (or maybe the foundation) of the iceberg rather than the whole formation. In light of this, the cosmopolitanism that I work with here is taken out of the broadest of *moral* understandings of cosmopolitanism. In her famous essay, Nussbaum (1997) posits that the sterner version of world citizenship means that one’s *primary* loyalty should be to human beings worldwide while local, national and various group loyalties are delegated to a secondary place in one’s heart. At its extreme then, world citizenship (interchangeable with cosmopolitanism) may mean a desire for a world state in which all citizens’ rights and duties extend to every human being on earth.

However, this vision of a world empire is a misreading of what cosmopolitanism is about fundamentally. On one level, cosmopolitan philosophy is a resistance to state power in intruding upon the citizen’s autonomy, and to state influence in producing

strong patriots, that are wary of questioning the practices of their own government. So why would we want a bigger, more powerful state, to replace the smaller one? Critics of cosmopolitanism, like Barber (1996), Glazer (1996), and Himmelfarb (1996) among others, insist on seeing cosmopolitanism through this light – that the final goal of cosmopolitanism is the destruction of any form of local social organization or association, i.e. the nation-state. To illustrate this point of view, consider Himmelfarb's criticism:

Above all, what cosmopolitanism obscures, even denies, are the givens of life: parents, ancestors, family, race, religion, heritage, history, culture, tradition, community, and nationality. These are not 'accidental' attributes of the individual. They are essential attributes. We do not come into the world as free-floating, autonomous individuals. We come into it complete with all the particular, defining characteristics that go into a fully formed human being, a being with an identity. Identity is neither an accident nor a matter of choice. It is a given, not willed. We may, in the course of our lives, reject or alter one or another of these givens, perhaps for good reason. But we do so at some cost to the self. The 'protean self,' which aspires to create an identity de novo, is an individual without identity, just as the person who repudiates his nationality is a person without a nation (p.77)

Himmelfarb's narrow view of the moral and emotional capacities of individuals who develop in a global setting or moral consciousness, i.e. global nomads and Third Culture Kids, simply ignores that human beings never exist in a social vacuum. They will attach themselves to other forms of identity. It is chilling that Himmelfarb fails to imagine any

form of hybrid identities, or acknowledge the space in between all of the ‘closed’ identity units she lists above.

Could it be that the critics’ misreading of Nussbaum’s cosmopolitanism stems from the inability to imagine citizenship outside of the boundaries of the nation? Could it be that they are still shackled by the citizenship-as-identity theory, rooted in a common culture and heritage, rather than citizenship as a set of civic virtues that are amenable to forming habits of character in any locale – *locale* being the operative word here? The kind of cosmopolitanism that I am interested in is the kind that Kwame A. Appiah (1996) advocates – a “rooted cosmopolitanism” (p. 264) that recognizes difference as the basis for love among human beings. Discussing the role of shared values in securing distinctions in a pluralistic nation-state, Appiah wonders why this practice can not go beyond the boundaries of the nation.

They [*theorists of inclusive citizenship*] seem to argue effectively when they insist on the centrality to democratic deliberation of certain values that bind all citizens together. But why should these values, which instruct us to join hands across boundaries of ethnicity, class, gender, and race, lose steam when they get to the borders of the nation (p.14)?

Is it so difficult today to imagine being civically engaged with others who are very different from us? If democratic citizenship as a process is a political struggle, an endless negotiation between social groups and their interests, how would these cultural interests become invisible under cosmopolitanism? Again, I turn to John Dewey (1997) and his critique of the Enlightenment’s cosmopolitanism. He seems to regret mainly the inefficiency or impracticality of the cosmopolitan ideal.

One of the fundamental problems of education in and for a democratic society is set by the conflict of a nationalistic and a wider social aim. The earlier cosmopolitan and ‘humanitarian’ conception suffered both from vagueness and from a lack of definite organs of execution and agencies of administration. In Europe, in the Continental states particularly, the new idea of the importance of education for human welfare and progress was captured by national interests and harnessed to do a work whose social aim was definitely narrow and exclusive. The social aim of education and its national aim were identified, and the result was a marked obscuring of the meaning of a social aim” (p.299-300).

He holds that nationalism gained strength in the drive for social aims just because it was the stronger in organization and administration. However, maybe we arrived at an age where global organization and administration is more viable than it used to be a century ago. Are supranational social formations like the European Union an indication of the possibilities? Consider also David Held’s (2006) reminder of the possibly positive effects of globalization (a detailed account of this is in Chapter Four) – the growth of transnational political agencies and activities (like women’s rights groups, environmental social movements, and other INGOs).

This explosion of ‘citizen diplomacy’ creates the basis of communities of interest or association which span national borders, with the purpose of advancing mutual goals or bringing governments and the formal institutions of global governance to account for their activities (p.5)



### *Democratic Cosmopolitan Citizenship*

To bring this discussion to the gates of international education, it intrigues me why organizations like the IBO resist using ‘cosmopolitanism’, instead of ‘internationalism.’ I assume it is due to a particular understanding of cosmopolitanism that I rejected above – the version that calls for the dismantling of the nation-state. It is understandable that the IBO would want to steer clear of any such accusations of its aims – it would be impossible to gain government permission to establish their schools anywhere. But more accurately, the IBO has neither interest in nor need for such an agenda. So why should it consider cosmopolitanism? One way to differentiate between ‘internationalism’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’ can be borrowed from Gunesch (2004). This issue is tied to the extended philosophical possibilities of cosmopolitanism. He argues that “internationalism cannot *question*, *transcend*, or even try to *ignore* the nation-state as a category, whereas these are strongly discussed features of cosmopolitanism” (p.5).

Gunesch recognizes different camps *within* the cosmopolitan debate in relation to the nation-state. There are cosmopolitan models that oppose the nation-state and there are those who reconcile the two. In the latter version we find Appiah (1998), for example, who argues that a ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ (p.91) is embodied in the institutions of the state, as opposed to the nation-state. The idea that the state functions as the “infrastructure of responsibility” (Scheffler (1990) cited in Heater, 2002, p.16) where individuals practice citizenship is held by many others who may consider cosmopolitanism.

Our obligations as democratic citizens go beyond our duties as politically unorganized individuals, because our capacity to act effectively to further justice

increases when we are empowered as citizens, and so therefore does our responsibility to act to further justice. Democratic citizens have *institutional means* [my italics] at their disposal that solitary individuals, or citizens of the world only, do not (Gutmann, 1996, p.71).

The point to highlight here is that cosmopolitanism can complement the ‘state’. However, the ‘nation-state’ compound is more problematic than even Gunesch (2004) realizes. In his essay, “Cosmopolitan Patriots,” Appiah (1998) ardently separates the hyphenated term because the nation, as an ‘imagined community’, is more morally arbitrary; it matters to people, much like a football game or opera would matter nationally, never *explained*, just felt. States, on the other hand, matter *intrinsically* “because they regulate our lives through forms of coercion that will always require moral justification” (p.97). One way to show that cosmopolitanism is more aligned with the state (and capable of being patriotically committed to it) rather than with the nation is in its differentiation from the Enlightenment’s universalistic humanism. Appiah’s version of the former does not want states to be engulfed in a single world-state. The premise for cosmopolitanism is cultural variety; humans live best on a smaller organizational scale, so we should defend not just the state, but all smaller circles of moral concern (p.97).

This is precisely the point where ‘cosmopolitanism’ becomes more useful than ‘internationalism.’ Gunesch (2004) is right in holding that cosmopolitanism is more suitable at capturing *identity* issues for international school students than internationalism, a term more appropriate for demarcating institutions than individuals. Transcending the ‘nation’ while pursuing the ‘state’ makes education of citizenship as civic virtues more viable, especially in international school settings. At the end of the

sections on ‘Democracy’ and ‘Citizenship,’ I asked whether it is possible to teach democratic world citizenship without a clear allegiance to one particular nation-state. The answer, developed in the ‘Cosmopolitanism’ section is that it is possible, but only if this is complemented by a classical liberal philosophical belief in the function of the state. To drive this point home, I can claim that although I am a Libyan and German national, I am (now) comfortable and willing to exercise my civic rights and duties in England. The ultimate ‘social aim’ of democracy for humanity in international education can only be truly accomplished with *active* cosmopolitan citizenship within the realm of a state. A cosmopolitan worldview must be complemented with the possibility for civic action, at least in form. The content of this action can be decided individually in accordance with one’s own personal and social interests.

The IBO should therefore seek to cultivate cosmopolitan adults who can and will participate in political activities worldwide. The passive/active nexus of citizenship education and/or moral education is preoccupying educational theorists thinking about national school systems as well. The fundamental point the IBO should pay attention to here is that inculcating attitudes and values of global citizenship does *not* necessarily lead to any behavioral manifestation of these values, just as teaching citizenship in national schools does not automatically lead to civic behavior. As effective social change needs to mobilize from the bottom (grass-roots) *as well as* from the top (conscientized privileged elites), the pertinence of citizenship education at IBO schools becomes more apparent. To integrate the ideas developed in my discussion, there need not be a complete overhaul of the IBO curriculum. The mechanism for teaching the value of active citizenship is already in place through the TOK and CAS components of the IB DP curriculum – a unit

on experiential political philosophy simply needs to be made a core requirement in one or both of these courses.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter constitutes the background of this thesis topic. As I already sketched out the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) and its ideology in the Introduction, I can now move straight into presenting some of the issues that are tied to its theory and practices, as researched and expressed by IBO educationists and practitioners. In other words, to gain as deep and full an understanding of the IBO as possible, it is worthwhile to study its theoretical and practical makeup. Whether my participants were or are aware of these ideas or not, the IBO system is nonetheless affected by research conducted on it and by the thoughts of its developers, as its continuous expansion in the last decades confirms. Therefore, I would like to submit the below as a sample of the IBO ‘culture’, its beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and concerns.

In order to bare this culture, I will look at empirical studies and generic review articles published by members of the IBO community (IB program teachers and practitioners, members of the IBO’s Research Unit at the University of Bath, IBO developers, managers, and some other interested parties). Their writings are mostly taken from the *Journal of Research in International Education*, the *IBO World Magazine*, and from the IBO Research Notes on the IBO website, and are what I deem representative of the IBO culture in general.

This chapter will be divided into three sections: the nature of international education, where I examine various definitions and conceptions of international education; international education and identity, in which I present what others have written on the influence of international schooling on cultural and emotional identity; and

finally, I will take a look at international education and globalization – a thought-evoking link that international educationists have recently tried to tackle.

As the emic perspective in this study is important, the issues discovered and developed in this part will help the reader and I gain a substantial understanding of international education and the role of the IBO within it, as viewed by a range of people, most of whom are members of an IBO constituency. However, I emphasize that the following is more of a listing of significant ideas, than a constructed argument to support a thesis. In light of this, this whole chapter should be regarded as parenthetical between the Theoretical Framework and the Results and Discussion chapters. It is meant to offer a glimpse of the IBO culture to anyone outside it in order to more fully appreciate the field research discussion in Chapter Five.

### *The Nature of International Education*

It is difficult to isolate a clear definition of international education. There are different versions such as peace education or cosmopolitan education, and these can be found at various educational levels. International education can mean a student-exchange program between universities in different countries. It can also refer to primary and secondary national school systems that espouse an education for ‘international understanding’ or for ‘world citizenship.’ The following will be subdivided into two parts: (a) General discussions on definitions of international education; and (b) Radical conceptions of international education.

### *General Definitions*

Let us begin with how the IBO (2006) defines the core aspects of its own international education:

- Developing citizens of the world in relation to culture, language and learning to live together
- Building and reinforcing students' sense of identity and cultural awareness
- Fostering students' recognition and development of universal human values
- Stimulating curiosity and inquiry in order to foster a spirit of discovery and enjoyment of learning
- Equipping students with the skills to learn and acquire knowledge, individually or collaboratively, and to apply these skills and knowledge accordingly across a broad range of areas
- Providing international content while responding to local requirements and interests
- Encouraging diversity and flexibility in teaching methods
- Providing appropriate forms of assessment and international benchmarking.

With the above points in mind, it is worthwhile to take a closer look at an historical development of the field. The need for this is emphatically stated by Robert Sylvester (2003), an Assistant Professor of Education at Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts, who examines historical and education research documents from the period 1893 to 1969 in an attempt to map the territory of international education in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to him, it is imperative that the term be freed from a paralyzing lack of definition because it is becoming a popular field of research. In light of this, Sylvester recognizes three movements that promoted international education. The first was the post-wars rebuilding of cities and relations between former enemies. The second influential phenomenon was the growing interests of multinational and multilateral

agencies, like UNESCO, in the 1940s and 1950s. The third was the expansion of foreign aid in the wake of national postcolonial movements in the 1960s and 1970s.

Remarkably, according to Sylvester (2003), international education was researched as a way of improving *national* civic education in the post WWII years. Most work on the development of a conceptual framework for the field was done in the United States and Europe. International education by the 1960s and 1970s was mainly associated, in definition, with “education for international understanding” and “education for world citizenship” (p.186). In short, with the tightening of social, political and economic ties between nations in the post WWII years, an ideological system that promoted tolerance and pacific attitudes towards others had to be developed. However, education policy makers and developers (i.e. UNESCO) had to tread lightly as “the tension between the aims of national education and the aims of international education seem[ed] to reside in the widespread fear that loyalties towards the nation state will be divided and weakened” (Sylvester, 2003, p.195). Sylvester goes on to cite a 1955 UNESCO document which emphasizes this issue:

Not only must people be given a wider variety of new skills, but it must be a conscious aim of education to find ways of carrying over from smaller groups to increasingly larger ones, and finally to the world as a whole, attitudes and values which make for the decent living in a complex society. Not least of the problems in this regard is that of the relation between national and international interests and loyalties. It would be idle, even dangerous, to deny the conflicts exist. But – and here lies the crucial task for the educator- it is possible and necessary to teach that loyal citizenship of one’s own country is consistent with world-mindedness and that



national interests are bound to suffer in international interests are ignored. (p. 10-11 cited in Sylvester, 2003, p.195)

Similarly, in *International Schools & International Education*, editors Mary Hayden and Jeff Thompson (2000) grapple with the ever-elusive classification of international education. In her capacity as Head of the International and Comparative Education Research Group, and his, as Director of the IB Research Unit at Bath University, UK, Hayden and Thompson find a diversity between different international schools that is hard to generalize into one workable definition. As much depends on the school (IBO World School, United World College, or a national school that offers an IB program), its location, and the student population it attracts, Hayden and Thompson (2000) agree that it is not necessary to find one all-encompassing description of international *schools*.

However, at the macro level, the crux is that the education promotes a certain set of *values*, be they an ‘international attitude’ or ‘global citizenship.’ Hayden and Thompson (2000) see diversity in international education as culminating in three connected dimensions: the curriculum, the cultural experience within a school, and in the administration/organization (p.4). Diversity through the curriculum is ensured through the various subject choices and subject depth available to students. Informally, students should be able to associate with various interest groups and associations within and without the school community. Diversity of cultural experience is guaranteed through the backgrounds of the student and teacher population. At the administrative/organizational level, Hayden and Thompson refer to the school’s management styles, decision-making processes, quality and standards setting, mission statements and other hidden dimensions,

such as gender and cultural balances in senior positions. If all these aspects are overtly examined and developed, diversity of and in international education would be secured.

Finally, Hayden and Thompson strongly recommend that nothing should be left to haphazard or careless outcomes, especially as the international education movement is becoming a key player at the market, political and social level of globalization. As they put it:

Under such circumstances the development of a charter, enshrining institutional obligations, and individual rights and responsibilities, would be a task for the group of international schools constituting the network, or for an association of those (schools, universities, and other institutional organizations) that share a common goal in the promotion of international education in national or international schools worldwide (Hayden and Thompson, 2000, p. 10).

In the annual IBO hosted Peterson Lectures, Dr. Nicholas Tate (2004) asked “What is Education For?” Nicholas Tate was the chief curriculum and qualifications advisor to the Secretary of State for Education in England. Currently, he is the director general for the International School of Geneva. In this lecture, Tate ponders on the philosophical purposes of education, arguing that the idea that education is merely to “get on in this world” is a deficient one in his mind. He believes that schools in national and international systems should be preoccupied with their students’ identities. The diversity of the international school student body is not unique to international systems. Indeed, Tate points out that some national state schools have a more culturally and socially diverse student population than some international schools. However, the distinction lies in the emphasis international schools give to that diversity in their mission statements.

Tate commends international schools for acknowledging that any one of their students may have multiple identities (by way of their parents, country of birth or countries of residence and belonging), and for the flexibility of the IBO curriculum that allows the students to make choices in constructing their identities, if those are not readily and easily transmittable through family and culture (p.9).

For the purposes of this study, the most significant point Tate makes is to caution educators and members of the IBO community in his audience not to instill in their students an indifference or even contempt for those who do have a strong sense of affiliation and allegiance to a particular nation or culture. Indeed, IBO educators should encourage IBO students to find such loyalties in themselves as well. He urges IBO students to “respect people who belong to other cultures and traditions because they have some sense of what it means to belong to a culture or tradition of their own” (p.10). This, he insists, is the difference between being ‘international’ and ‘cosmopolitan,’ which he defines as a state of rootless wandering.

*Radical International Education.*

On a different vein, Greg Carroll (2003), an assistant professor at Salem State College who had taught at various public and international schools worldwide, wonders why we are so adamant in seeking definitional clarity on international education. Alluding to Goodson’s (1990) suggestion, Carroll (2003) argues that this may have “more to do with the establishment of turf and the process of gate keeping. While it is nice to have a clear set of criteria that can govern a field, the danger is that such criteria are then used to deny access” (p.2). Indeed, he thinks that international education should

actively avoid a clear-cut definition of what it is. “Why differentiate and reify good international education from good education” (p.3)?

Using a critical literacy approach, Carroll (2003) contends that international education can easily be viewed as education for the globally mobile, mercantile elite and that it is simply another form of hegemony (p.3). However, if international educators were prepared to focus more on the practices rather than on the theory of international education, on the consequences of the cultural capital transmitted through its walls, then we may move closer to closing the divide that education in general has created between the public good and private gain (p.4).

Carroll (2003) raises an important issue that does not seem to be addressed in most of the literature I reviewed. Implicitly, international education academics and practitioners are aware of the public-private question. However, the fact that the IBO has extended the reach of its programs by implementing them in public schools or state-funded private schools worldwide seems to lay this matter to rest for most. Having said this, it would be beneficial for all if the privileged status of IBO schooling (at least historically) were acknowledged by all members of the IBO. Indeed, we need to keep in mind that implementing IB Diploma program in public (state/government) schools in Africa, Europe and the Middle East costs the schools around CAD \$27,000 (IBO, 2006). Furthermore, it is safe to claim that IB programs are mostly offered at private schools (international or national) worldwide. However, in 2004, Cambridge and Thompson claimed that 43% of schools that offer the IB DP are state funded (p. 163), and the number keeps rising.

Peter Zsebik (2000), a PhD candidate at the University of Bath who taught in many international schools worldwide, is likewise interested in the politics of international education. Referring to Paulo Freire's (1970) seminal *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Zsebik asks what the nature of international education politics is. He suspects that international schools may also be affected by a "culture of silence" (p.64) due to the complex mixture of cultural forces at work in that environment. This culture of silence, Zsebik suggests, could be in the form of unawareness by the rich and privileged of their position, or in the form of minority groups losing their cultural identity to conform to that of the majority group. Zsebik thinks that this can be avoided if the school explicitly promotes a *transformative* intellectual environment, rather than implicitly encouraging a hegemonic environment (p.65-66). It is interesting that Zsebik associates a transformative intellectual environment with a distinctly international ideology, and a hegemonic force with a "local" perspective. Zsebik suggests that a truly international education must align with the following:

The essence of being an international school [...] rests not with the nationalities of the students, nor with the makeup of the teaching staff, and certainly not with the location of the physical plant. The concept of an international school rests in the ability of the individuals in the school community to prepare the student successfully to integrate, and to provide a positive transformative contribution to the global environment. In effect, an international school can call itself international school because it has achieved a paradigmatic stance based on its political convictions that its curricular output will produce individuals of a transformative intellectual variety (p.67).

Now that we have examined the various conceptions of international education in the field, we can turn one of its particular concerns – the effect of international education on student cultural identity.

### *International Education and Identity*

Ideally, an international school would have as many students from diverse national and cultural backgrounds as possible. This would greatly facilitate the fulfillment of the ideological aims of international education – international understanding, world-mindedness, cultural flexibility (Allan, 2002). However, these are much more difficult to define and evaluate than intended academic outcomes. Indeed, the effect of intercultural learning on students has been a sticking point for some researchers in the field of international education. Researchers seem to agree that in an international school context, cultural interaction does happen. However, they are interested in *why* and/or *how* this process takes place, the consequences of it especially in terms of identity formation, and the implications for curriculum development. All six articles summarized below are based on empirical studies on the identity of international school students. It appears that where the researchers find that international education students agree to have procured an international identity through schooling, all (participants and researchers) acknowledge a slight problematic in that ‘privilege.’

In 1997, Hayden and Wong published an article in which they presented research conducted on cultural preservation in international schools. They asked whether the inculcation of international attitudes and values in students took away from the maintenance and development of their own cultural identities. Interested particularly in the IB Diploma program (IB DP), they surveyed three groups of individuals at the

University of Bath, which has strong research connections to the IB programs. These were: students at the university who came with an IB Diploma, teachers of IB programs who were studying for a masters in education at the university, and general members of staff. The researchers found that the IB Diploma does contribute to international understanding, while simultaneously preserving individual cultures and national identities (p1). The students questioned on this matter believed that global awareness and an international outlook strengthened the understanding of one's own culture and one's identity, rather than retracted from it. Interestingly, Hayden and Wong found that where students felt there *was* a loss, it was not viewed as negative but as a way of shaking off parochial prejudice and intolerance (p. 4). Fortunately, the authors do highlight the latter as a potentially dangerous point which the IBO should be aware of. In any case, participants thought that it is the environment, rather than the curriculum that promoted their international understanding.

Hinrichs (2002) also studied the effect of the IB DP on international understanding, specifically in comparison to the American Advanced Placement program in homogenous schools in the United States. She found that IB DP students were adept at *defining* international understanding. However, she acknowledges that “the measurement of international understanding used in this study is, at best, a *predictor* of future behavior (p.8). It is difficult, she says, to measure the *utilization* of knowledge and suggests that better strategies to assess international understanding need to be developed and validated (p.9). Her words of caution are important to note when looking at all of the studies presented in this section.

On a more skeptical note, Michael Allan (2002), from the International School of Amsterdam, conducted an ethnographic case study on an international school in the Netherlands. Interested in evaluating the outcomes of the ideological aims of many international schools, he applied a school improvement theory used in national schools to measure academic outcomes, to “explore the cross-cultural nature of learning in an international school by investigating the process of intercultural learning and trying to identify the factors involved” (p.65). The model adapted from school improvement theory actually looks for dissonance in the process between aims and outcomes, and tries to make out the factors involved

In Allan’s (2002) study of school effect, he had to keep in mind overlapping environments such as school, host country, majority student culture, other student cultures, and one’s own culture – in other words, he adopted a ‘cultural borderlands’ perspective, where students interact in the intersects of these cultures. Allan found that the most intercultural learning took place among students from minority cultures, because learning happened during “cross-cultural dissonance and possibly conflict at the frontiers of students’ and school cultures” (p.66). Minority-culture students had to negotiate or adapt and majority-culture students only gained some awareness of other cultures. This led Allan to suggest that international schools should explore the cultural dissonance and conflicts within their student body, to address the issues head on, if true international understanding is the aim (p.67). In addition, Allan, like Zsebik (2000) turns to “radical critical cultural pedagogy in which students challenge and redefine parameters of knowledge so that it is not always defined and referenced within the paradigm or narrative of eurocentrism” (p.81).



Turning from the social to the personal, we find the most popular and widely debated term to capture the individual identity of international education students: Third Culture Kid (TCK). The term was first coined by Usem, Donoghue and Usem (1963) but became popularized in international school settings by Pollock and Van Reeken's (1999) book *The Third Culture Kid Experience: Growing Up Among Worlds* (cited in Fall, Thompson & Walker, 2004). Pollock defines TCKs as individuals who spent the majority or most significant part of their developmental years in places outside of their parents' cultures or nations – usually their passport culture. Their parents work or study outside of their home culture due to economic, political or religious reasons (Gould, 2002, p. 151). Generally, Pollock and Van Reeken acknowledge both the positive (i.e. expanded world-view, cross-cultural enrichment, cultural flexibility and adaptability) but also the negative consequences of an international education (i.e. confused cultural identity, rootlessness, grief from hidden personal and interpersonal loss). Indeed, due to the two main realities characteristic of TCK life - cross-cultural living and high mobility in the developmental years and beyond - TCKs and TCK adults face two challenges: “developing a sense of identity in the face of rootlessness that can accompany extended cross-cultural living, and resolving the grief from relationships disrupted by high mobility” (p. 152).

Although Pollock and van Reeken do not attribute TCK identity to any particular course of study (i.e. IBO), international educationists, specifically in the IBO, have certainly recognized the concept. For example, urged by the literature on TCKs, Fall, Thompson and Walker (2004) undertook a study to explore the sense of belonging and identity of 11 adult TCKs aged 45-65. It should be noted that George Walker, one of the

authors of this work, was the Director-general of the IBO based at the headquarters in Geneva at the time of this research. The authors wanted to see if there is a link between the theory of TCK and the personal experiences of such individuals. In their field research, data was collected through a survey and in-depth interviews of two groups of adults, one currently living in their passport country and the other living outside of their passport country. After collecting the narrative histories of the 11 participants, Fail, Thompson & Walker (2004) analyzed the extracts and detected some common themes in the stories that were echoed by their literature review: encapsulated marginality (those feeling marginal to the mainstream with no real sense of belonging), constructive marginality (those who use their multicultural identities to their advantage, even though there is a certain ambivalence), and finally, reverse culture shock (pointing to those who feel foreign at 'home,' who can not adjust back to the passport country) (p.333).

The last work I want to examine in this section is the recent recommendation presented by Konrad Gunesch (2006), mentioned briefly in the Theoretical Framework. In response to the ever-growing debate on the term 'international' – definitions, processes and effects thereof, Gunesch proposes a highly intriguing distinction between the institution and the individual in the field of international education. While 'international' and 'internationalism' are apt conceptualizations for institutions (i.e. international schools), he argues that a more suitable term to mark the *individual* would be 'cosmopolitanism.' Gunesch is quick to point out that this is not yet another substitute for a familiar idea; he insists that cosmopolitanism, as a term, should be recognized as a complementary element to internationalism (p. 251).

As he is aware of the inconsistent delineations in the literature he reviewed, Gunesch clearly defines cosmopolitan cultural identity, or cosmopolitanism (he uses these interchangeably), by the catchword phrase of ‘feeling at home in the world.’

This feeling at home in the world could be specified as interest in or engagement with cultural diversity by straddling the global and the local spheres in terms of personal identity. Straddling in this sense means having one foot in each sphere, and finding a balance in which the global is decisive without necessarily dominating all the time (Gunesch, 2006, p. 256)

In light of his extensive literature review, Gunesch (2004) develops an identity model for “*individual* trial, adaptation and use by the people mainly involved in international education, namely the teachers and students” (p.2). This identity model is in the form of a “cosmopolitan matrix,” constituting seven key elements from cosmopolitanism debates and culminating in the *ideal* individual outcome of an international education. The following points are the main areas of concern or engagement for a cosmopolitan person:

- *a straddling of the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ spheres*, with the impact of the global (‘world citizen’) being decisive
- *a ‘connaissance’ with respect to (local) cultural diversity wherever possible*, rather than an interested ‘dilettantism’
- *a general willingness and openness towards engagement with cultural diversity*, which still allows for ‘dislike’
- *the mobility to travel*, which is indispensable but not in itself sufficient
- *an attitude that rejects the ‘typical’ tourist*, while the ‘occasional’ tourist accommodates remaining concerns

- *a notion of 'home' that can be extremely varied*, while it is no longer undisputedly the 'home culture,' it also is not 'everywhere'
- *a critical attitude towards the (native) nation state*, while expressions of identity can range between 'rooted' and 'unrooted' (Gunesch, 2004, p. 5).

Conveniently, Gunesch (2004) presents each component as two points on a continuum (i.e. between the global and the local) – the opposition inherently comprises both ends. In addition, rather than mastering all components at the same time, a cosmopolitan may move from 'competence' of one point to another and back again. In other words, the category of cosmopolitan cultural identity is fluid and wide enough to accommodate a wide variety of persons, in various stages of development, and in various institutions of international education.

The issue of identity may be a sore spot for the field of international education. Indeed, Allan (2002) and TCKs experts indicate the potential emotional harm such an education can inflict on its students. The work done by Fail, Thompson and Walker (2004) and Gunesch (2004) are two examples of how the institution can better prepare the emotional care of its students. In particular, Gunesch's model of cosmopolitan identity seems promising. The IBO needs to be aware of both its own practices, as well as the effect of various forces beyond its immediate control. To this effect, the IBO must also examine its role in 'globalization.'

### *International Education and Globalization*

There is an interesting development in the approach to globalization in recent research and literature in the field of international education. Globalization is emerging as a force and idea that can no longer be ignored by the field. It seems that there are

different strands or conceptualizations of the term which highlight either a favorable or negative view of globalization in general, and indeed positive or negative views on the role of international education in globalization. The following paragraphs present a sample of the various juxtapositions of the two terms. While some (Drake, 2004; Murray, 2002; Paris, 2003) are concerned about the homogenization of knowledge, values and attitudes in international schools that comes with one understanding of globalization, others (Cambridge, 2000, 2002; Walker, 2000) adopt a more conciliatory understanding of the relationship between internationalism and globalization. However, as most articles above refer to David Held's (2001, 2006) definition of globalization, I will first briefly focus on Held's helpful deconstruction of the term.

#### *Globalization Analysis*

David Held and Anthony McGrew (2006) are prominent theorists of the theoretically confounded phenomenon of globalization. Their work influences many contemporary social and political theorists. Held and McGrew argue that there are three main schools of globalization: the hyperglobalist, the skeptical and the transformationalist views. The matter is further exacerbated by the fact that within each school of thought, we have theorists who locate themselves on varying points on a scale of promotion or resistance to that conceptualization. According to Held and McGrew, theorists agree, at least, on globalization being a reorganization of the significance of space and time between people and systems in our contemporary world. In their more eloquent words,

[g]lobalization can be conceived as a (process or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the *spatial* organization of social relations and transactions,

expressed in transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction and power (p.1).

It may be useful to visualize the different schools mentioned above as varying *reactions* to that phenomenon. To this effect, hyperglobalists see globalization in a predominantly economic (rather than in a socio/cultural and political) light. To this effect, globalization is seen as an economic force driven by multi-national corporations that ultimately undermines the sovereignty and capacity of nation-states to organize and regulate political, social, cultural, legal, environmental and economic affairs within their territories (p.2). The skeptics, on the other hand, question the *novelty* of globalization as a force encapsulating our time alone. They argue that the intensity of the interdependence of the world and the emergence of one unified global economy (as hyperglobalists insist) is quite exaggerated, especially when compared to the years 1890-1914 (following the industrial revolution). Rather than having one global economy, post Cold War globalization is breaking up the world into economic and political *blocs*, in which different forms of capitalism are manifested. In addition, skeptics claim that hyperglobalists are gravely underestimating the continuous dominance of national power and sovereignty in social existence (p.2). Finally, the transformationalists (such as Held and McGrew) believe in the intermediate way. According to them, globalization should be analyzed through the question of power. Globalization has not only 'transformed' extensity of social relations through advanced informative, communicative and technological developments, it has also reorganized and rearticulated economic, political, military and cultural power (p.3). In this way, the transformationalist view is similar to the skeptics' idea of division among the world between the powerful and the non-

powerful. Importantly, this distribution of power, however, encompasses both the local (home) and the global (abroad) – i.e. poverty can affect people even in the most powerful economic and political communities. Politically, globalization has indeed, as the hyperglobalists claim, affected the traditional conception of the nation-state. However, neither the sovereignty nor the autonomy of states is simply diminished by such processes. Indeed, any assessment of the cumulative impacts of globalization must acknowledge their highly differentiated character since it is not experienced uniformly by all states. Globalization is by no means a homogenizing force (p. 6-7).

Therefore, the transformationalists argue that globalization has actually provided new opportunities for political expression and participation, a new venue where citizens of various states can express themselves *between* and *through* states, by, for example, mobilizing anti-globalization demonstrations or setting up institutionalized networks to regulate activity which go beyond national political jurisdiction (p.7).

#### *Guarded towards Globalization*

Having introduced Held and McGrew's (2006) highly referenced work, it is easier to categorize James Cambridge's (2002) analysis of international education and global product branding. As the head of research projects at the IB Research Unit, University of Bath, he has worked extensively on critical approaches to international education. In this particular article, Cambridge applies a theory of product branding and finds that organizations that provide international education (such as the IBO) are global brands because they

- are strong in their home markets and have a geographical balance in sales;

- address similar consumer needs in different countries worldwide and have consistent positioning, by making reference to the same values in all markets; and
- maintain a product category focus by being associated with a particular product which is identifiable with a corporate name (p. 241-242).

Indeed, Paris (2003) similarly sees the IBO as a global force and goes further to discuss the impact this has, especially on South Australian educational institutions and their students. Opting out of the national educational system, Paris argues that schools implementing the IB DP are subscribing to a centralized and homogenized global curriculum that does not take into consideration local needs. As Paris puts it,

fundamentally, each culture that chooses to run with the IB-DP potentially relinquishes its values and practices of education in exchange for those of the western world. From this perspective, the IB-DP is very much a process of globalization rather than a process of internationalization (p.235).

Similarly, Drake (2004), the head of secondary school at the Chinese International School in Hong Kong, is wary of applying what he calls Eurocentric modes of educating in non-Eurocentric regions of the world. It would be “unwise to ‘clone’ on to their models educational systems and methodologies designed to accommodate cultural norms in another part of the world” (p.203). Although he concedes that the IBO is aware of the potential cultural dissonance when lending its programs to others, he warns that national educational leaders need to be aware of possible consequences and incorporate them into a considered “intentionalist design” rather than allow them to be “accidental by-product[s]” (p.203).



It appears that both Paris (2003) and Drake (2004) attribute a leading role to international education in the globalization phenomenon. Concerned more with the homogenization of ideas and knowledge that it potentially creates, they vary slightly from Cambridge's (2002) conceptualization of international education as a global brand, framing the latter in the hyperglobalist debate. Moreover, Cambridge seems less explicitly critical about the position international education finds itself in, mainly due to a lack of discussion on the implications of such a condition. However, his ambivalence is clarified more when we consider the following works by Cambridge (2000) and Walker (2000). The following reveals that these members of the IBO community subscribe to the transformationalist view of globalization.

*Receptive towards Globalization*

In *International Schools and International Education*, Cambridge (2000) looks at international school organization and management through the prism of globalization and "the seven cultures of capitalism," a phrase coined by Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (1993). Alluding to Held and McGrew's (2006) work discussed above, he claims that the hyperglobalists' conviction of the spread of one set of capitalist values is a myth if we consider Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars' work, which delineates at least seven different forms of capitalism found in the national cultures of the United States of America, Great Britain, Japan, France, Germany, The Netherlands and Sweden (with India and China being added in later editions) (p.181-182). There are also seven sets of "values in tension" (found in organizational and management frameworks) which mark universal dilemmas that are solved differently by different cultures. It is the belief in and the promotion of these diverse solutions that place Cambridge in the transformationalist

camp. Applying this model to the management of various international schools ensures, Cambridge suggests, the diversity that is necessary.

In the conclusion to the same book, the then Director General of the IBO, George Walker (2000) also refers to Held and McGrew's (2006) deconstruction of globalization. In his view, international education must be recognized as a symptom of a globalized and globalizing world. However, he also insists that the *diversity* that confounds those who try to develop a workable single definition of the international school, is precisely the site in which the resistance to homogenization is located. Advocating the primacy of national education systems, Walker argues that international education offers an invaluable venue for negotiating the 'transformation' of power relations within nations (p.201). Indeed, he reminds the readers that since 1995, the General Council of UNESCO has encouraged its member states to assimilate its 1974 established definition of international education into their own systems.

Finally, the three major issues discussed in the pages above, the nature of international education, international education and identity, and international education and globalization are intended to reveal a deeper and more nuanced background to the ideas developed in the theoretical framework for this thesis. I have deliberately refrained from composing an argument in this chapter, so that the above can be read simply as a sample of IBO concerns. The only interference I concede is in my selection of the particular works I deemed representative and in my interpretation of these articles. Although not an exhaustive literature review, this chapter at least highlights the major questions preoccupying that field. All of my reading was accompanied by an unshakable anticipation for a gap to be filled, for a question to be answered. Is it enough? Is the IBO

doing all that it can to truly achieve the goals it states in its mission statement? This is where my literature review reveals the gap in empirical research on IBO practices. In the following chapter, I hope to address this gap by exploring the political values of some former IBO students and discussing these with reference to the Theoretical Framework.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### RESULTS: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter I will analyze the results and discuss the categories developed with reference to the research questions stated in the Introduction, and within the theoretical framework (Chapter Three). At this point, it is best to reiterate the two-tiered purpose of this research:

1. To explore the political values of some students, who have experienced IBO schooling circa ten years ago.
2. In the vein of critical qualitative research, to discuss what the political values of IBO students *should be*.

#### *Questionnaire Results*

The questionnaire (see Appendix I) in the first phase of data collection helped to answer the first three of the four research questions I posed at the beginning of the study:

- If the political values of former IBO students manifest themselves more **passively** or **actively**;
- If the values subsume a more **national/local** or **international/cosmopolitan** worldview;
- If there is a **pattern** of values discernable among the group;

Initially, each question in the questionnaire was considered interesting and important to determine political orientations of the participants. The questions were also meant to compel my participants to actually think and maybe form a true value about the issues I asked about. I would deem the questionnaire successful if it made the participants a little more aware of political concerns and possibilities than they already were.

The adapted questionnaire implied in its question-wording and responses coded categories that reflect the research questions stated above. However, it transpired that further categorization was possible and necessary to interpret data more deeply. In light of this, I also looked at whether participants were preoccupied or **interested in business and the economy**, and pushing that tendency to the extreme, if they promoted **privatization and free market independence**, if they were inclined towards **social welfare politics**. I also looked at their thoughts on **citizen freedom** or autonomy in the liberal sense, and finally, whether they favored government or **state interference** in public and private affairs. These **nine** categories could then reveal any regularities and **patterns** among the group. Although the group is too small, the purpose of the questionnaire was simply to suggest a possible representation or broad tendencies of some former IBO students, manifested in the implied categories presented here. The answers to the questionnaire also helped in devising the questions for the second stage of data collection: the message board.

It is imperative that the reader understands that the percentages stated in Table 1 refer to the total out of all possible responses in the questionnaire that represent a political tendency (i.e. passive), and *not* to the respondents who were ‘passive.’ The reason for my focusing on the values rather than the participants is because I found it impossible to determine that any one participant is, for example, *either* passive *or* active – their values were at best ambivalent, if not inconsistent with other values they held within the questionnaire.

Table 1

## Political tendencies of former IBO students

Political Tendencies	% of responses indicating tendency
Passive traits	57%
Active traits	37%
National/local traits	64%
International/cosmopolitan traits	67%
Interest in economics and business	67%
Promoting privatization and free market	83%
Inclined towards social welfare policy	35%
Interested in citizen freedom and autonomy	64%
Permissive of State/government interference	33%

I coded answers to the questionnaire manually and interpretatively. Apart from being an invaluable learning experience, this allowed me to make choices about interpretation that a computer software program would make uncritically. Although more subjective, I decide from within the study's scope, imbedded theories, and the individual participant's response pattern. This is especially helpful when responses are not congruent with each other. For example, Participant One agreed that "incomes should be made more equal," but also that "private ownership of business and industry should be increased," and that "the government should take more responsibility to ensure that

everyone is provided for.” These values are not necessarily compatible as businesses might be inclined to maximize revenue for their own profit, rather than for the public at large. The discrepancy here may be explained when we examine the questionnaire itself, the responses, and qualify that with the message board answers.

### *Message Board Results*

The message board discussion (see Appendix II) was the second phase of data collection, which served to expose the participants’ definitions through their own words. The eight questions I posed in this phase were inspired by the categories that developed through the first phase. Here, the categories could be more nuanced and qualified as the participants revealed their political values in their own words. In addition, these open-ended questions were intended to explicitly link a discussion on political values to their experience at Frankfurt International School. As the questionnaire made no reference to the IBO, I found it necessary to make the participants aware of the context in which I am placing them. To this effect, the message board helped me to answer the last of the four secondary questions I asked at the beginning of this study, including:

- And finally, to what extent the participants attribute, if at all, their current political values to their **IBO experience**.

The eight questions I posed fell under the following categories, as these were the most significant to the four research questions: definitions and views of ‘**national**,’ definitions and views of ‘**world citizenship**,’ definitions and views of **passive**, and **active**, citizenship. There were two additional categories in the message board that were not discernable in the questionnaire: the **Frankfurt International School** setting code and another political tendency code – **cynicism** about politics and political action.

The message board revealed that when asked directly about their values, the participants thought that they were mainly international in outlook with subtle national sympathies. Their predominant passivity was justified by general political cynicism. As to the relation between IBO schooling and their values, they felt that although FIS did not teach them these values, they found that the diverse student population encountered there served to *enhance* these international tendencies. In order to explore the significance of the coded categories more deeply, it is worthwhile to look at those which were the focus of the four research questions from the outset of this study.

#### *Questionnaire and Message Board Integrated Discussion*

In light of the discussion in the theoretical framework, it is evident that some political tendencies are more compatible with the moral trajectory of democratic cosmopolitan citizenship. These would entail political interest and activeness, coupled with a predominantly cosmopolitan *weltanschauung* that does not dismiss the function of the state as a necessary societal management system. With this in mind, it is time to turn to a discussion of the questionnaire and message board results.

Before I continue, I would like to note that throughout this field research, I could not shake the impression that all I am collecting are hypothetical values which do not necessarily translate into action. As I was not able to ethnographically observe the participants in their lives to determine for myself whether they are more passive or active, and national or international, I had to rely on their self-report. The message board certainly provides a depth to the discussion that an analysis of only the questionnaire could not have supplied. My coded categories and the resulting discussion may therefore be valid as far as the meaning of the questionnaire and the message board, but any ‘truth’



claim cannot be stated, as any statement will always be fallible. In light of this, the furthest I can go with this discussion is an engagement with the participants' understanding of themselves and the categories at hand. Discussing two categories together (passive/active and national/international) is a way not to put them in opposition to each other. For example, I believe that a person can exhibit both passive and active political orientations simultaneously depending on definition and situation. This applies to the discussion on the whole group as an entity, as well. When I write 'they' and 'their tendencies,' I am not extending one person's responses to everyone; especially, in the message board, the participants usually first agreed with the other responses, either overtly or tacitly, thereby establishing a shared "normative-evaluative realm"<sup>11</sup> (Carspecken, 1996, p.85), and then added their own qualifications.

#### *Passive / Active?*

An examination of the passive or active political values of the participants is extremely relevant to the democratic cosmopolitan citizenship ideal developed in the Theoretical Framework chapter. In the questionnaire, I assigned the 'passive' or 'active' codes to questions like, "Do you vote in your country of citizenship" (Question 7), whether they are active in terms of donating to international and national charities (Question 11), or whether they were ever members of any social or political associations or clubs (Question 10). On the surface, both the questionnaire and the message board suggest that most of the participants hold more passive tendencies than they do active. But what does passivity or activity mean to the participants? Passivity in terms of voting was justified by the participants in the message board because they could not vote in the

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<sup>11</sup> An act of position-taking that carries with it "cultural understandings about what is right, wrong, good, or bad" (Carspecken, 1996, p.85).

country they lived in, suggesting that is not important to them to either have an input in the society they live, or even to inform themselves about voting in their country of citizenship from abroad. One participant felt the need to qualify the fact that s/he was active with “but have sympathetic views for others,” without explaining in what ways s/he was active. Another participant defined activity through acquiring knowledge of his/her cultural heritage rather than in terms of transformative civic duties and action as discussed in the Theoretical Framework.

Furthermore, when asked whether political values should be public or private knowledge, the participants leaned towards private in order to avoid “tension.” However, some thought that if there were a political issue that they felt strongly about, they would advocate for it. Again, there was no explanation of what this advocacy would entail. It could mean a discussion or even an argument among acquaintances or a more publicly organized form of political action, such as petitions, demonstrations etc. Conversely, one participant expressed a view more in line with the ideals of democratic civic engagement: open discussion and resolution of public issues. Reading the responses of the other participants, this participant argued,

There is no reason to keep them private. If the international school has taught us one thing it's that we should respect others for their beliefs (religious, political or otherwise). Besides being open about who you are and what you believe in fosters trust – if you disagree with a person, at least both can agree to disagree about the issue and move on (Participant x in Message Board, 2006, Question 7).

Question Eight on the message board addressed their faith in political participation. Most agreed that it did have the power to improve things *in theory*.

However, in practice, the participants were mostly cynical about the power of political participation, arguing that people would participate more if their input counted. This, they felt, was mostly not the case, especially if you did not belong to the majority constituency. One participant blamed the short-sightedness of politicians who are politically active to improve their own standing rather than that of society in general. Such doubt was echoed in the questionnaire responses regarding the participants' general interest in politics.

It is interesting that all participants expressed something along the lines of "politics affect everything." However, most also doubted that participation has any effect on politics with words such as: "untrustworthy," "unreliable," "people do not feel their opinions are heard," "corruption," "game of spin and manipulation." They seemed to view it from a distance, as something one needs to keep an eye on, but only to the extent that it may affect them personally. When a person does not believe in the efficacy of a democratic system, when a person feels they should avoid political confrontation, how would s/he act to improve anything? Would they even be interested in public politics and strive to be better informed about their options? The general cynicism in the group, which admittedly is not something one can directly link back to an IBO experience because of the possibility of endless variables beyond my control, is more vivid in the explication of the national/international categories.

#### *National / International?*

To discuss the national-international axis, it is necessary to start with the FIS setting code. As the fourth research question asked to what extent, if at all, the participants attribute their current political values to IBO schooling, the first two

questions of the message board investigated just that. Because the IBO uses the terms ‘national’ and ‘international’ to delineate its interests, I decided to use these rather than ‘local’ and ‘cosmopolitan’, in the questions regarding FIS. Moreover, the adapted questions in the questionnaire clearly made use of national and international, with the latter referring to ‘inter’ nation-states relations. Perhaps understandably, the questionnaire also relied on national political concerns to measure participants’ values. Consequently, the total possible responses that would indicate a ‘national’ view were quite high to begin with.

To explore the national and international category more profoundly, the message board uncovered that participants agreed that they were indeed ‘international-minded’ today. However, most were reluctant to link this attitude directly to an educational design. FIS was considered a place where this international attitude was enabled and enhanced due to the diversity of the student population, rather than taught. This echoes other empirical research conducted on the international-mindedness of IBO students reviewed in Chapter Four. In addition, an international attitude was described as being “open to the world and other views” and one that “made a black and white, right and wrong view of the world impossible.” Being bi-national or having traveled and lived in other countries was also considered as a contribution to one’s international outlook today.

Most noteworthy for the purposes of our discussion is the fact that no participant disagreed with having an international world view. This is reflected in the questionnaire, where 67% of the responses were coded as internationally oriented. Furthermore, although FIS did not teach them these values, it nevertheless had a life-long social and political impact on their lives. Therefore, the view of the utility of an international

outlook was captured in the second message board question. Here, an international outlook manifested itself socially with regards to being “open minded and curious about people” from different countries, accepting different perspectives, useful for meeting new people and establishing quicker bonds for business. Most seemed to ignore the question of the political impact of going to FIS; they regarded tolerance and curiosity about people and politics as the embodiment of FIS’ long-term political impact on them. In the main then, it appears that participants believe that FIS has had a long-term effect on them socially, due to a moral attitude towards others in this world. However, international-mindedness was not conceived of in political terms.

Perhaps confusingly, the questionnaire results also showed that responses demonstrating national views measured at 64% (only 3% lower than international tendencies). To elaborate, questions that could expose national tendencies in the questionnaire included choosing that the aim of a country should be to “make [...] sure this country has strong defense forces” and “maintaining order in the nation” (Questions 1 and 2), as well as a questions delineating problems that either a national government, the United Nations, or a national government with UN coordination should resolve (Question 19). Admittedly, coding the first two points mentioned here in the ‘national’ category could be problematic. For example, what makes “maintaining order in the nation” more ‘national’ than fighting rising prices as another possible aim of a country? The coding for each question in the questionnaire is interpretative at best and I deemed a concern with defense forces and national order as predominantly national protection and preservation matters.

However, when I asked in the message board, “How strong is your national allegiance to any country? Do you feel at home in one place more than any other? Why and how,” the answers conveyed that while some are ‘proud’ and identify with their ‘home country’ (meaning *either* their national country of citizenship(s) or their parents’ nationalities), they felt no national allegiance to any. Here, the phrase “home is where the heart is” is more applicable than ever, as home was identified by “where my family and friends happen to be”, or “I have moved around too much for a place to feel like home”, or “It’s great to have bits of both [*citizenship countries*] but a bit weird not having just one.” The most elaborated view on the problematic of national allegiance and ‘home’ for these adults is,

I have no real national allegiance. And am happy about that. Who made the arbitrary decision that a language and line in the sand divided one set of people from another? As Shakespeare said do we not all bleed, cry, fall in love? Nationalism is akin in my mind to a degree of insecurity and fear of the unknown. Yes I think Holland is a nice place, Germany has its merits too. But just because I was born and lived somewhere does not make it inherently better or make me inherently better than others. I feel at home in London because it is without doubt the most cosmopolitan place on earth. All languages, countries, traditions have congregated into this place. There is no reaction to people its ‘live and let live’ which is great (Participant y in Message Board, 2006, Question 6).

This participant’s definition and view of national allegiance mirrors Nussbaum’s (1996) understanding of patriotism as exclusionary and arrogant. Elsewhere, the same participant wrote that he noticed how people who did not have an international schooling seemed

more “insular” to him. The ambiguous understanding of terms and the ‘them’ versus ‘us’ mentality are potentially harmful to the agenda of democratic cosmopolitan citizenship. It is imperative that the participants’ faith in an international worldview does not inherently dismiss or condemn those with national feelings and values. As cosmopolitan citizens, they need to be able to deliberate and resolve their differences of opinion.

At this point, it is time to turn to what participants thought about world citizenship (interchangeable with cosmopolitanism). When they were asked to merely define it theoretically, most expressed a moral realization of humanity’s interdependence and responsibility for others’ pain and suffering. Again regrettably, this positive view of the term was sometimes demonstrated with reference to what was perceived the oppositional ‘patriotism’ of those who view themselves “as the best of the world,” finding this “ignorant and lazy;” world citizens are those who do not adhere to “political labels and citizenship marketing.” In short, it seemed that world citizenship was defined in the same language as international-mindedness.

However, this positive trajectory of world citizenship quickly diminished when asked if world citizenship could replace national citizenship. The general impression was that world citizenship would lead to a *loss* of identity or diversity or an interesting World Cup tournament. Their initial moral definition of world citizenship seemed to have been retracted when opposed to national citizenship, and these former IBO students sounded similar to critics of Nussbaum (1996) and Appiah’s (1998) cosmopolitanism. Only one participant retorted to the others who saw it in terms of an identity and diversity loss, “I don’t believe that it necessarily has to change who you are. You can still be entrenched in your Italian culture (example), but have the mindset that you belong everywhere.”

Why did the other participants have such a knee-jerk reaction to world citizenship the second time they were asked about it? Is it because I pushed them to think of it in practical terms? It may be that although they held a mainly cosmopolitan worldview, they interpreted 'world citizenship' in the citizen-of-one-world-state understanding that I want to move away from. I propose that this is due to the word 'citizenship' especially when mentioned in the same sentence as 'national citizenship.' Not being able to conceive of citizenship as possible outside a national identity matrix, these participants naturally would view world citizenship in a world identity form. It seems that they would only reinforce a *theoretical* perspective which has to stop short before reaching any practical manifestations. Can it be that the form of cosmopolitanism these former IBO students carry is one more aligned with 'political correctness' – knowing what and when to say something, rather than with political values? My concern is that the participants simply do not have the ideological tools of *praxis* with which to navigate their cosmopolitan political leanings. Being too suspicious of 'national' forms of civic engagement that went beyond cultural heritage and identity, these IBO adults found themselves justified in being politically private, passive and cynical. Therefore, it is important that IBO students now and in the future have a sufficient understanding of the 'nation-state' compound, in order to give them the functional option of being *outside* of the nation but *within* the state, where they can exercise effective political action.

#### *Other Categories*

Indeed, five other categories that emerged through an analysis of the questionnaire may be significant in explicating possible reasons for the participants' predominant passive tendencies. These are: 'Economics and business interests,'



‘Promotion of Free Market Independence,’ and ‘Citizen Freedom’ from ‘State/government Interference’ and various ‘Social Welfare’ policies. If my literature review and theoretical framework included a discussion of liberal and neo-liberal political and economic ideology, I may have been better qualified to harness this data into further exploration in the message board. However, I am not in a position to engage with economic philosophy or the implications of tendencies such as a high-level promotion of free-market independence and a low-level interest in social welfare policies.

Having said this, I may speculate about the meaning of the tendency clusters. Questions that could demonstrate neo-liberal free-market economics versus a classical liberal social policy consciousness would be Question 12 in the questionnaire (see Appendix I), where the participant had to place his/her views on a scale from one to ten to indicate agreement. The significant point was that the participants as a whole rarely placed themselves in the mid-range. They either mostly agreed with statements like, “private ownership of business and industry should be increased,” and mostly disagreed with “governments should aim for a society with extensive social welfare, but high taxes.”

On the surface, the results show that the group is more money-oriented than society-oriented (67% for Economic Interest and 66% for Free-Market promotion versus 35% for Social Welfare interest). However, such a claim’s validity is difficult to establish as there is neither control group, nor a further investigation of the categories in the message board. Moreover, my interpretation of these responses could also be inaccurate due to an insufficient understanding of political-economic theory. Consequently, I may only speculate about whether a high money-oriented outlook effects civic engagement. Is

there a correlation between this and a high tendency of political passiveness? These questions are important but I did not have the skill, time or resources to address them here.

### *Limitations*

No qualitative research project would be complete without addressing its limitations. The first limitation I must turn to is the quality of the research tools – the questionnaire and the message board. The wording in some questions of the questionnaire was considered restrictive by some participants who pointed this out to me in the ‘Comments’ Question 22. Questions that attempted to differentiate between ‘country of citizenship’ and ‘host country’ were also considered confusing.

As mentioned before, I am happy with the questions only so far as they may have made the participants aware of civic engagement issues just by being forced to take a stand in form of an answer. However, I am also acutely sensitive to possible meaning discrepancies inherent in the wording of the question and the interpretation of it by the participant and then myself. This was especially evident in my interpretative coding of the data. I tried to resolve this by keeping in mind that I share the holistic meaning fields (Carspecken, 1996, p.95) of the participants. However, I cannot ignore that my and the participants’ experiences after IBO schooling may have shifted the meaning field considerably.

In light of this, the message board was a crucial instrument for deconstructing some tacit understandings of the categories, by divulging in more explicit modes of understanding. Whether the message board was a successful tool for such an endeavor is still an open question. A focus group interview would have been more effective,

especially because I would have been able to explore meanings more deeply and in dialogue with the participants. Furthermore, I was not able to ask more than eight questions due to a fear of losing participants. Walking out of a focus group discussion is much more difficult than anonymously signing out of the message board.

I also regret not having had the time and resources to include more former IBO students from different private schools. A bigger sample than this may have warranted more confident indicators towards probable and, of course, situated generalizations. A bigger sample would have also lain to rest concerns some may have about my going to the same school as the participants. Although, I still believe that an emic perspective is valuable, I cannot ignore that I may have tacit assumptions that I fail to recognize and explain to others. Working as part of a research team would have greatly diminished this short-coming as others, possibly etic observers and data recorders, may be sharper in pointing out assumptions that need explication.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

On a personal note, this thesis represents the accumulation of the knowledge constructed thus far during the two and half years of my studies at Concordia University. I have not only developed a more fluent epistemological language concerning social research and its focus here, but also an ontological understanding of where I must stand in all this. In short, this thesis is not only how I think but also who I am now – it is my *praxis*.

It has been a long and confounding journey from the first ‘I’ described in the Introduction to the ‘We’ slowly and carefully unpacked through the theoretical framework, literature review and field research for this thesis. I may safely say that the web of knowledge concerning the International Baccalaureate Organization is now three-dimensional. I set out to explore the political values of some former IBO students like myself and found that their political tendencies were similar to the values I held before entering this Education program at Concordia University.

Although the *direct* influence of the IBO on my participants’ current political values can not, and should not, be evaluated here, it is safe to claim that the group I worked with held mainly cosmopolitan and passive political values. The implications of especially the latter tendency may be grave. The passivity of this group is problematic when viewed from the realm of critical qualitative philosophy, as well as the overt agenda of democratic cosmopolitan citizenship developed in the Theoretical Framework. Some participants appeared to believe that a cosmopolitan worldview is not compatible with and maybe even in direct opposition to any nation-state social and political

formation. An ‘either/or’ mentality is not conducive to the ideal of democratic cosmopolitan citizenship, which holds that all forms of association are justified as long they are open to others.

The primary purpose of this research project was largely fulfilled. As to the secondary purpose of developing an ideal of the political values of IBO adults, I believe I have begun to conceptualize a form of democratic cosmopolitan citizenship valuable enough to be researched further. With a bigger sample of participants and better research tools, like a focus group discussion, it may be possible to discern a situated generalization of political tendencies among former IBO students. If further research would disclose that past, present and future IBO students consistently show political passiveness, is it too bold to claim that they simply do not have the tools to imagine a rational cosmopolitan active citizenship? If this is the case, then the IBO should seek to teach civic engagement virtues that are possible even if citizenship-as-identity is difficult for its student body. To think in cosmopolitan ways may not be enough without an outlet for this value’s active counterpart – democratic citizenship. The IBO mission statement is commendable but the process by which it tries to achieve its mission should be in continuous development. The IBO must be careful that it does not unknowingly teach general political cynicism in lieu of cosmopolitan activeness. As for myself, I am now in a position to claim that I am indeed ready to participate politically in any given state that allows me to, keeping in mind my cosmopolitan values.

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## APPENDIX I

## Political Values Questionnaire

1. When thinking about politics, people sometimes talk about what the aims of a country should be for the next ten years. Below are listed some of the goals which different people would give top priority. Please mark which one of these you, yourself, consider the most important and next important.

	MOST IMPORTANT	NEXT IMPORTANT
A high level of economic growth		
Making sure this country has strong defense forces		
Seeing that people have more say about how things are done at their jobs and in their communities		
Trying to make our cities and countryside more beautiful		
Don't know because:		

2. If you had to choose, which one of the statements below is most important and next important to you.

	MOST IMPORTANT	NEXT IMPORTANT
Maintaining order in the nation		
Giving people more say in important government decisions		
Fighting rising prices		
Protecting freedom of speech		
Don't know because:		

3. Here is another list. In your opinion, which would be most important and which the next most important?

	MOST IMPORTANT	NEXT IMPORTANT
A stable economy		
Progress toward a less impersonal and more humane society		
Progress towards a society in which ideas count more than money		
The fight against crime		
Don't know because:		

4. If the country you are citizen of went to war, would you be willing to fight for your country?

-Yes

-No

-Don't know

5a. How interested would you say you are in politics?

-Very interested

- Somewhat interested
- Not very interested
- Not at all interested
- Don't know

5b. Please explain your answer to 5a:

6. Here are different forms of political action that people can take. Please mark, for each one, whether you have actually done any of these things, whether you might do it or would never, under any circumstances, do it.

	HAVE DONE	MIGHT DO	WOULD NEVER DO	DON'T KNOW
Signing a petition				
Joining in boycotts				
Attending lawful demonstrations				
Joining unofficial strikes				
Occupying buildings or factories				

7. Do you vote in *your country of citizenship*? If your country of citizenship does not hold democratic elections, please select 'Not allowed'.

- Always
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never
- Not Allowed

8. If applicable, do you vote in the country you live and work in (*your host country*)?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never
- Not allowed

9. Do you feel like you *should* be more politically active in life?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure because:

10. One can be a member of various clubs or associations because of common interests or values. Are you a member of *any* political or social association?

- Yes
- No

11. Have you ever participated in *humanitarian* projects through non-governmental organizations?

- Never
- Yes, by donating to local and international charities.

- Yes, by participating in various community service work.
- Yes, by .....(please complete)

12. Below are four basic kinds of attitudes concerning the society you live in. Please choose the one which best describes your own opinion.

- The entire way our society is organized must be radically changed by revolutionary action.
- Our society must be gradually improved by reforms.
- The way society is now is not perfect, but it is the best it can be.
- Don't know

13. Here are various issues. How would you place your views on this scale? '1' means you agree completely with the statement on the left; '10' means you agree completely with the statement on the right. If your views fall somewhere in between, you can choose any number in between.

Incomes should be made more equal	We need larger income differences as incentives for individual effort
-----------------------------------	---

1            2            3            4            5            6            7            8            9            10

Private ownership of business and industry should be increased	Government ownership of business and industry should be increased
--	---

1            2            3            4            5            6            7            8            9            10

The government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for	People should take more responsibility to provide for themselves
--	--

1            2            3            4            5            6            7            8            9            10

Competition is good. It stimulates people to work hard and develop new ideas	Competition is harmful. It brings out the worst in people
--	---

1            2            3            4            5            6            7            8            9            10

Governments should aim for a society with extensive social welfare, but high taxes	Governments should aim for a society where taxes are low and individuals take responsibility for themselves
--	---

1            2            3            4            5            6            7            8            9            10

14. On the whole, are you very satisfied, rather satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy is developing in *your country of citizenship*?

- Very satisfied
- Rather satisfied
- Not very satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

-I don't care

15. If your country is not the country you currently live and work in, are you satisfied with the way democracy is developing in *your host country*?

- Very satisfied
- Rather satisfied
- Not very satisfied
- Not at all satisfied
- I don't care

16. Generally speaking, would you say that *your country of citizenship* is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of the people?

- Run by a few interests
- Run for the people
- Don't know

17. Some people favor, and other are against, having *your country of citizenship* provide economic aid to poorer countries. Do you think that *your country* should provide more or less economic aid to poorer countries? Would you say it should give...

- A lot more than it does now
- Somewhat more than it does now
- Somewhat less than it does now
- A lot less than it does now
- Don't know

18. How about people from other countries coming to *your country of citizenship* to work. Which one of the following do you think your government should do?

- Let anyone come who wants to
- Let people come as long as there are jobs available
- Place strict limits on the number of foreigners who can come here
- Prohibit people coming here from other countries
- I don't care either way.

19. Here is a list of some problems. For each one, would you mark whether you think that policies in this area should be decided by the national governments, by the United Nations, or by the national governments with UN coordination?

	National Governments	United Nations	National governments with UN coordination
International peacekeeping			
Protection of the environment			
Aid to developing countries			
Refugees			
Human Rights			

20. Again, how would you place your views on this scale? '1' means you agree completely with the statement on the left; '10' means you agree completely with the statement on the right. If your views fall somewhere in between, you can choose any number in between.

The best way to ensure peace is through military strength	Good diplomacy is the best way to ensure peace
---	--

1            2            3            4            5            6            7            8            9            10

Stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost	There are far too many environmental laws and regulations in this country
--	---

1            2            3            4            5            6            7            8            9            10

21. Here are two statements which people sometimes make when discussing good and evil. Which one comes closest to your own point of view?

There are absolutely clear guidelines about what is good and what is evil. These always apply to everyone, whatever the circumstances.

There can never be absolutely clear guidelines about what is good and evil. What is good and evil depends entirely upon the circumstances at the time.

-Agree with statement A

-Agree with statement B

-Disagree with both because:

22. Please write down any comments or concerns you may have relating to the questions and/or answers of this questionnaire:

## APPENDIX II

### Message Board Questions

Welcome Note (Read First!)

Hello everyone,

Thank you for coming this far. This is Phase 2 of the research and once you answer (hopefully) ALL 8 questions, you'll have my eternal gratitude and you're all done!

I wish there was a quicker way of doing this. A focus group interview withal of you together would have been ideal, but alas, we are a mobile people! If it were possible to spend enough time with each of you to hear what you have to say about things, I would have dropped the questionnaire altogether.

Please click on the 8 questions I posted to you. If possible, try to do them in order. As always, there are no right or wrong answers, so just write what you think and feel. Don't worry about spelling and grammar.

By this time, you'd have created a username which of course could be a pseudonym. (You can always go back and change your registration details if you want to change your name.) You can read what others have written as this is meant to be a sort of discussion.

Just try to have fun with what I think are interesting questions for us!



*[Each question was posted as a separate topic on the message board. This makes it easier to navigate and read for the participants.]*

Reem's Question 1

When we were at FIS, we were encouraged to be international-minded and world citizens. To what extent, if at all, do you feel that this is something you still feel today?

*[6 responses were posted]*

Reem's Question 2

In what way, if at all, did schooling at FIS have any long-term effects on you? I mean socially and/or politically?

*[7 responses were posted]*

Reem's Question 3

In your own words, what is 'world citizenship?' [There is no right or wrong answer – just tell me what you think.]

*[6 responses were posted]*

Reem's Question 4

Would you say you are an 'active' or a 'passive' citizen? Why?

*[6 responses were posted]*

Reem's Question 5

Do you think that world citizenship could replace national citizenship? Is that desirable?

*[7 responses were posted]*

Reem's Question 6

How strong is your national allegiance to any country? Do you feel at home in one place more than in any other? Why or how?

*[6 responses were posted]*

Reem's Question 7

Do you think that your political values should be 'worn on the sleeve'? I mean, should they be public knowledge or are they very private for you?

*[7 responses were posted]*

Reem's Question 8

Do you think that increased political participation by people (including yourselves) would make a difference in society? In other words, do you believe that you have the power to improve societies at 'home' or in the world?

*[7 responses were posted]*